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CBW

Coach and Bus Week

The PSV industry's news weekly Issue 296 20 November 1997

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BUSINESS**



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Stop Government's untested seatbelt proposals now

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: All the PSV News 4-11 ■ CTA Show 12 & 13 ■ Tour News 14 & 15 ■ Legal News 16 & 17 ■ Marksman 18 ■ Diary 20 ■ Letters 21 ■ Profile 22 & 23 ■ Integrated Transport 24 ■ Deals & Dealers 26 & 27 ■ Back Up 30 ■ People 55

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"H" 51R/Toilet
1996 "N" DAF SBV3000WS Van Hool Alizee
"H" 49R/Toilet/Air Conditioning
1996 "N" EOS90 49R/Toilet/Air Conditioning
1995 "M" DAF SB3000WS Van Hool Alizee
"DH" 51R/Toilet
1995 "M" EOS 90 49R/Toilet/Air Conditioning
1995 "M" DAF SB3000WS Van Hool Alizee
"H" 51R/Toilet
1994 "L" EOS 90 49R/Toilet
1994 "L" DAF SB3000WS Van Hool Alizee
"DH" 51R/Toilet
1994 "L" DAF SB3000WS Van Hool Alizee
"H" 51R/Toilet
1994 "L" EOS 90 49R/Toilet/Air Conditioning
1994 "L" DAF MB230LT Van Hool Alizee "H"
51R/Toilet
1992 "J" DAF MB230LB Van Hool Alizee "H"
51R/Toilet
1992 "J" DAF SB3000 Auto Van Hool Alizee
"H" 51R/Toilet
1992 "J" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee "DH"
51R/Toilet
1990 "G" DAF 2300 DHTD Duple 320 57
seater
1990 "G" DAF SSB2300 DHS Van Hool
Alizee DH 51R/Toilet
1989 "F" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH
53R
1989 "F" DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee DH
53R
1989 "F" DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee Sh
49R/Toilet
1989 "F" DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500
51R/Toilet
1989 "F" MB230LB Plaxton 3500 51R/Toilet
1988 "E" DAF MB230LT Plaxton 3500
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1995 "M" DAF SB220 Ikarus Citibus 49 Str
1992 "K" DAF SB220 Ikarus Citibus 49 Str
1992 "J" DAF SB220 Ikarus Citibus 42 Coach Seats

DAFBUS

HIGH QUALITY USED COACHES

1994 "L" BOVA FLD, 53R
1993 "K" MAN Jonckheere Deauville 51R/Toilet
1993 "K" SETRA S215 HD 49R/Toilet Air
Conditioning
1993 "K" DENNIS Berkhof Excellence 51R/Toilet
1993 "K" VOLVO B10M Jonckheere Deauville
53R
1992 "K" VOLVO B10M Jonckheere Deauville
53R
1992 "J" DAF SB2305 Plaxton 3200 DH 53R
1992 "J" DAF SB2305 Van Hool Alizee DH
51R/Toilet
1992 "J" DAF SB2305 DHTD Duple 320SL 57R
1991 "H" DAF SB2305 DHTD Duple 320SL 57R
1990 "G" DAF MB230 LT Plaxton 3500 49R/T
1990 "G" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH
49R/Toilet
1990 "G" VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500 51R/Toilet
1990 "G" VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500 49R/Toilet
1990 "G" DAF SB3000 Plaxton 3500 49R/Toilet
1989 "G" BOVA Futura 51R/Toilet
1989 "G" SCANIA K113 Van Hool Alizee Sh
49R/Toilet
1989 "F" DAF SB2300 DHTD Duple 320
51R/Toilet
1989 "PP" BOVA Futura 49R/Toilet
1989 "F" DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee DH
51R/Toilet
1989 "F" VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500 53R
1989 "F" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee
49R/Toilet
1989 "F" VOLVO B10M Van Hool Alizee H 53R
1989 "F" DAF SB3000 Plaxton 3500 51R/Toilet
1988 "F" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee SH
49R/Toilet
1988 "E" VOLVO B10M Plaxton 3500 49R/Toilet
1988 "PP" LAG Panoramic 49R/Toilet
1988 "PP" BOVA Futura 49R/Toilet
1988 "PP" DAF SB3000 Van Hool Alizee Dh
51R/Toilet
1987 "PP" DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500 53R Air
Conditioning
1987 "D" DAF SB2300 Van Hool Alizee "H"
49R/Toilet
1987 "D" DAF SB2300 Plaxton 3500 49R/Toilet
1987 "D" T815 Van Hool Alizee 51R/Toilet

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Tel 01733 467000 Fax 01733 467154

Editor

Mike Morgan 01733 467139

News editor

Mark Williams 01733 467140

e-mail: MarkW@automotive.emap.co.uk

Production editor

Frank Forster 01733 467142

Tourism editor

William Golden 01733 467141

Northern news editor

Andrew Jarosz 0113 2566505

Designer

Tina Golden 01733 467143

Group sales manager

Tony West 01733 467151

Senior sales executive

Neil Mason 01733 467147

Leanne Dow 01733 467148

Sales executive

Anthony Orfeo 01733 467149

Classified telesales executives

John Shier 01733 467144

Natalie Coe 01733 467146

PA to publishing director

Lisa Wilson 01733 467157

Group production manager

Nicky Curd 01733 467121

Production assistants

Debi McGowan 01733 467123 Suzanne Porter 01733 467124

Publishing director

Mark Barton 01733 467136

Managing director

Ian Griffin 01733 467007

Subscriptions 0181 956 3140, fax 0181 956 3023

Emap Readerlink, Audit House, 260 Field End Road, Ruislip,

Middlesex HA4 9LT or Jazz Walshe on 01733 467048

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EDITORIAL

Stop seatbelt nonsense

IN ONE SHORT WEEK it has become clear that the coach and bus industry needs to do more than simply lament the late announcement of proposed regulations to cover the installation and testing of seatbelts in coaches and minibuses.



Last week this magazine led the industry's condemnation of the Department for the Environment, Transport and Regions. Rules for the installation of seatbelts should have been embodied in legislation from either day one, or December 1996 at the latest. No rules meant that the industry had to adopt best practice, so it turned to recognised European standards.

However, the countdown to Belt Day on 10 February 1998 for pre-1988 coaches used on school transport gives us less than three months, and the choices are stark.

A blend of existing construction and use requirements for seatbelts and testing of installations to European M3 requirement is the pragmatic option. The alternative being put forward by the DETR is not based on testing - or, if it is, officials are keeping it to themselves.

Option one means the status quo. A large number of existing seatbelts in coaches and minibuses could satisfactorily stand up to an MoT, provided they have been professionally installed.

Option two means 'all change'. Existing seatbelt installations would almost certainly have to be modified. And we all know who would have to meet the cost.

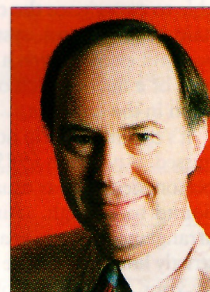
The fact that this state of affairs is not only unsatisfactory but wrong has produced a strong ground swell of opinion which now needs to be harnessed.

CBW is saying to the DETR - STOP. But it needs the whole industry to back our campaign.

Nobody is suggesting that seatbelt installations should not be approved. Nobody is saying that seatbelts should not be incorporated in the MoT test. However, we are adamant that the regulations should be framed as a consequence of recognised tests.

We want you to tell us what you think. Turn to page five of this magazine where you will find a voting form. Fill it in and return it to the CBW office ASAP. We cannot afford to let the DETR think the industry has no voice.

Your industry needs your vote.



MIKE MORGAN, *Editor*

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All aboard for USA

**CBW
STUDY TRIP
USA**

Setting out for 'Frisco'

THE MAIN travel event next year is the CBW Study Trip USA. Taking in the famous Motorcoach Expo in California's Sacramento and the stunning sights of San Francisco, it promises to be a cracker.

The annual Motorcoach Expo is a winning combination of major coach show, business sessions, day tours and social events. Our five night tour includes entrance to the show and business sessions, plus admission to the evening opening night reception at the California State Railroad Museum. After Motorcoach Expo, we leave the luxury of Sacramento's Hilton Hotel for two days in San Francisco. Our hotel here is in the famous Fisherman's Wharf district and, as well as being able to experience the city's hair raising tram system, you will also be given a VIP tour of a major coach operation in the Bay area.

It's definitely a trip not to be missed. And, from £985 per person, demand (as usual) is bound to be high. Airline arrangements mean space is strictly limited, so make sure of your place by booking early.

The 1998 CBW Study Trip USA leaves London Heathrow on Saturday 31 January and returns on Friday 6 February.

● Full details are available from Paul Tappin at Tappin Coaches on 01235 819393.

Davies family back in business with all-new drive train

Third time around for Omni re-launch

By Mark Williams

ONE of the country's first lowfloor minibuses, the Omni, is again being built as a new vehicle.

The troubled integrally-built bus was launched in the late 1980s by CVE, achieving significant sales into local authority fleets. But in the intervening years, after problems with the original Land Rover engine, it was re-engined and sold by Omni Coach Company, which went into liquidation early this year.

Now, the Omni has been resurrected in a new form by FTL Omni, from the same County Durham site which has been associated with the marque since its inception. FTL Omni is run by Jim and John Davies, sons of founder Fred Davies who, with Grant Lockhart, sold the first incarnation of the mould-breaking integral.

"The assets of the Omni Coach Company which failed earlier this year have been purchased by a group of individuals who have, in turn, recapitalised the com-

pany through reversing the new company into a cash shell," said Jim Davies, sales director, who reassured buyers that the new management is setting a new agenda for business.

"The company has this summer re-engineered the product - a task now complete - which sees the vehicle with an all-new power train, front hub and rear suspension," said Mr Davies.

The new Omni uses a Euro 2 Iveco engine, driving the front wheels through a Quaife six-speed gearbox.

Using a steel, box-section welded frame to rollover standard, the panelling is all GRP. Floor height is 210 mm when lowered. Suspension is self-levelling air bellows both front and rear.

The artist's impression (right) also reveals extensive restyling. Interior plans show a familiar layout, with the front of the vehicle reserved for driver and engine.

Among plans for the new Omni, to be launched next January, are the launch of a PSV version.

FirstBus renamed

FIRSTBUS has recorded interim profits up 35% on turnover up 47%... and is changing its name to FirstGroup.

The new identity, following in Cowie's footsteps, is to reflect the broader base of FirstBus' business... a bus, rail and - shortly - airport company.

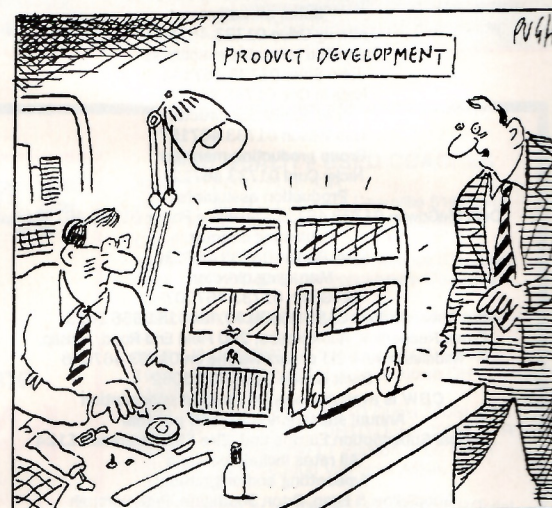
In the first six months of this financial year, until 30 September, FirstBus made a before-tax profit of £32.5

million on £363.4 million turnover. The bus division was the star performer, producing a pre-tax margin of 14%.

The result was pegged back by the 1.5% operating margins of the rail company, Great Eastern Railway, in which FirstBus has a 24.5% stake. An overall 10.9% margin may be further eroded by the Great Western franchise, a share of which was acquired in March.



Lockhead and Smallwood: now at helm of FirstGroup



"FORGET IT, ANTHONY, IT'S ALL OFF"

Mayflower drops Rolls-Royce bid

WALTER Alexander parent company Mayflower will not go ahead with its bid for Vickers - the giant industrial which owns Rolls-Royce.

The specialist body manufacturer, which has among its successes the MGF contract, had made a massive bid for the entire Vickers group, which had touted Rolls-Royce alone for £400 million. Faced with this competition, bidder BMW

threatened to scupper Rolls-Royce's development plans by refusing to sell it engines, and Mayflower announced that if this were to happen, it would drop out.

Vickers was also hostile to the bid, saying Mayflower would not be able to find a buyer for Vickers Defence Systems, which it would not want, or fund needed investment at Rolls-Royce.

for lowfloor mini but same factory restyled bodywork...



Re-worked Omni adds modern styling, new engine and driveline but familiar construction method

Stort sends back five

STORT VALLEY is still untangling the assets of Travellers in the wake of its insolvency.

Stort, which acquired the assets of the Hounslow operator (CBW, 13 November), is hoping it will be able to retain all the staff as negotiations with the vehicle finance companies continue. Five coaches have been repossessed by Dawsonrentals, said Stort director Simon Underwood.

"A Javelin and four Setras have been returned to Dawsonrentals," said Mr Underwood. "That leaves us with 47 vehicles at present, but negotiations are continuing."

One leasing company is known to have stepped in to help Travellers continue operating through the crisis.

Brents says 'no change'

A GUARANTEE of no job losses has been given to drivers by Brents, to switch its centre of operations from Watford to Harlesden.

Parent company Metroline is expected to save more than £100,000 a year, which will see it relocate on premises used by Silverdale, among others. A company spokesman said that drivers were being offered generous relocation packages.

The coach holiday department of Brents is to move to the Metroline offices in Harrow.

Council's transport arm privatised

TRANSLINC, the transport arm of Lincolnshire County Council, has changed hands in a management buy-out. The privatisation is believed to be the first of its kind for a local authority.

Heading the buy-out team is current TransLinc general manager, Brian West, who becomes md on 30 January.

TransLinc currently consists of 300 staff, including part-timers and has an annual turnover of £10 million. It has a contract hire fleet of 1,200 vehicles and operates itself 140 passenger carrying vehicles, ranging from 12-seat minibuses to 53-seat coaches. It has its own PSV O-licence for 25 vehicles.

However it main business is the operation of 300 Lincolnshire CC contracts a day, with most for special needs.

The new deal consists of a six year agreement for contract hire and maintenance, plus a two year extension for passenger services. The new team will also take responsibility for maintaining the Authority's ambulances and emergency service vehicles.

Mr West's team beat off stiff opposition from Arriva subsidiary, Midland Fox, with the eventual decision being decided by criteria including: revenue implications, ability to deliver quality services and staff wishes.

Tendering for the buy-out began in 1996, when Mr West team's was the only bid. However, the Council decided to go back to the marketplace for commercial bids.

"It's been a long nail-biting process," said Mr West. "But we're delighted that we've finally won the contract, and particularly pleased that the staff vote, one of the deciding criteria, saw 92% of the staff vote for our bid."

"It's a dream come true for me - I started with TransLinc 32 years ago, when the organisation consisted of just three people. It's now a professional industry."

Shoot down seatbelt MoT

THE hasty decision by the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions to produce MOT rules for seat belts, with three months before the final school seat belt deadline, is being slammed throughout the industry.

Experts say the proposed regulation is dangerously flawed (CBW, 13 November), and may lead to thousands of pre-1988 coaches already fitted in readiness for the 10 February deadline being taken off the road.

But are these proposals

what the coach and bus industry really wants?

One belt manufacturer has hit out at the proposals as too little, too late. Carstyle's sales director, Carey Lennox-Lamb, has been in the automotive market for 22 years, part as a qualified MOT tester.

"They should have stuck to best engineering practise to cover the issue of retrofit," said Mr Lennox-Lamb. "The consultation document is littered with flaws, and a hell of a lot of refits will have to be done. This document

comes three years too late."

Mr Lennox-Lamb said the insistence that tubing cannot be drilled may eliminate one of its own recommended and fully tested retrofit methods, on Van Hool seats.

Vote now on which route you believe the Government should take. Should the consultation document be stopped and the MoT regs be framed around established good practice OR can the DETR be allowed to introduce its untested proposals?

VOTING FORM

Should the Government go ahead with its untested seatbelt proposals? (Yes/No) _____

First name _____

Surname _____

Job Title _____

Address _____

Post code _____

Return this form to Mike Morgan, Editor, CBW, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough, PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154

in brief

■ IN A YEAR when Wallace Arnold's Summer bookings increased by 20%, the Leeds-based tour operator has achieved another milestone with its Christmas and New Year programme which has attracted 12% more customers. Marketing manager, Gordon Durrans says the offer of free Homeplan Insurance has been a contributory factor.

■ A SPECIAL NETWORK of commercial red bus routes will again be running in the capital on Christmas Day. London Central, along with Metroliner Travel and Stagecoach East London will be operating six routes serving central and inner London on half-hour frequencies throughout the day.

■ A NEW AGREEMENT between the UK and Georgia aims to provide a framework within which coach operators can operate between the two counties. The agreement was signed by transport minister Baroness Hayman. Operators requiring information should contact the Department's International Road Freight Office in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, tel 0191 201 4090.

■ MIDLAND BLUEBIRD managing director Douglas Pelling and Councillor Tony Kinder of West Lothian Council have cut the turf on a £3.1 million European state-of-the-art depot for 100 buses at Deans Industrial Estate, Livingston. Facilities will include a staff gym. West Lothian Council is backing FirstBus in its attempts to reverse the MMC ruling that it must sell Midland Bluebird and one of Strathclyde Buses four Glasgow depots.

■ CONSULTATION on the Government's new integrated transport policy closed last Thursday and transport minister Gavin Strang has hailed the exercise a success. More than 4,000 responses were received and Dr Strang said: "These contributions will play a key role in shaping our policy which we will publish as a White Paper in Spring."

■ L GARDNER plc, the engineering group now specialising in the automotive and aerospace markets has announced operating profits up 78% to £4.8 million as turnover increased from £22 million to £35.3 million. Avon Transmissions acquired in October is to be relocated to Patricroft.

Rapid response to British taste by Spanish coachbuilder

Optare midi is on target

By Mike Morgan

FIRST PRODUCTION EXAMPLES of Optare's niche-carving Solera midi-coach, which are scheduled to be with operators before Christmas, will differ in detail from the prototype as a result of rapid response to operator comments since its UK premier last month.

When Optare unveiled the stylish Spanish-built 35-seat coach in European spec at the Coach & Bus 97 show its launch was backed by over 20 orders.

CBW understands that the £90,000 Solera will be making its debut in the fleets of Eddie Brown of Uxbridge and Coach Companions. However, despite the short period since the appearance of the right-hand drive prototype at the NEC, Optare Coach Sales and the Spanish bodybuilder, Fergui, have been working on a series of modifications in response to the differences between European and UK markets.

Optare Coach Sales manager, Chris Gee, told CBW that a series of specification changes not only recognised personal preferences in the UK but also the specific requirements of this country's regulations.



Production version of Optare Solera will reflect personal preferences of UK market

try's regulations.

Greater use of soft trim on the interior will be available as will a range of decorative window cappings. Skirt height has been lowered, bringing the opportunity to lower the first entrance step by around 100mm and the step well is to have deeper treads. In addition, the side lockers will have a lower floor, adding further capacity to the total of 4.5 cubic metres available.

The plug door will be

modified from forward-opening to rearward-opening and a pavement window incorporated to aid driver vision. A peage window in the door is an option.

Mr Gee says six Soleras are currently in-build at the Fergui factory in Northern Spain and a total of 20 will be in operation on British roads by the end of May 1998 as Optare gears-up to supplying around 30 in the first 12 months.

Solera is the first coach in

the UK built on the 11-tonne Mercedes-Benz 01120 chassis/cowl. For coach application it has upgraded front axle and rear air-suspension.

A front-mounted six-cylinder 211bhp Merc engine provides the power and CBW editor Mike Morgan has put the prototype through its paces on the demanding CBW road test route. How did it perform? Read his report in next week's issue of this magazine.

Shift in demand affects mini/midi sales

TRENDS IN THE MINI AND MIDI SECTORS have continued on the downward swing according to the latest figures from the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders. Minibus sales are significantly reduced as are those of sub nine-metre

midis, reflecting shifts to larger vehicles.

Registrations of new passenger carrying vehicles in three main subsectors during the first 10 months of 1997 confirm earlier trends. The 3501-7400kg minibus/coach market is dominated by

Mercedes-Benz 0611D, 0612D, 0711D Vario and registrations are down from 1142 in 1996 to 583 this year. The main difference being the large numbers of pre-Euro 2 709D T1s sold to big bus groups.

Iveco, the number two supplier in this sector with its Daily range, has seen registrations slip from 471 to 299 for the first 10 months. However, last month's registrations witnessed an increase from 12 to 28.

Meanwhile fortunes are much brighter in the 3501-7400kg sector where Mercedes-Benz 0814D Vario is taking a growing share of the overall mini/midi market. October registrations were 53 compared with 13 of its successor T2 - total

registrations for the year to date are up from 248 to 457.

In the sub nine-metre bus sector the dominance of the shortest version of the Dennis Dart is affected by the dramatic move to super lowfloor, taking most of its sales into the big bus league.

This trend towards the lowfloor super-midi has affected other suppliers, including Optare with its MetroRider which has registered 86 compared with 181. Consequently the significance of the size adopted for Optare's lowfloor Solo is appreciated. Solo is full-width and will straddle the nine-metre boundary between midi and full-size with lengths of 8.5 and 9.2 metres and production is scheduled for the New Year.

Mini/Midibus Registrations

	1997		1996	
	October	Year to date	October	Year to date
3501kg-7400kg				
Iveco Ford	28	299	12	471
Mercedes-Benz	57	583	88	1142
Toyota Optimo	4	50	0	41
7401kg-7500kg				
Mercedes-Benz	53	457	13	248
Midi under 9 metre				
Dennis Dart	18	57	25	443
Marshall Mini	0	7	6	9
Optare MetroRider	10	88	19	181
Volvo B6	0	1	0	12

Optare ... The bus stops here.



Len Atkinson has the most boring job in the world but he doesn't mind because he's a detail man, which suits us because Optare's a detail company. From the moment the build team starts in our one-stop shop, Len is over their shoulders making sure that the screws are screwed in tight, and the bolts are bolted on right. So that when it comes to the final inspection Len knows, and the build team knows, that the quality and reliability associated with the Optare name will never be tarnished.

That's why you'll find us very rewarding people to do business with. At Optare quality is not just a promise it's a fact. Every vehicle we build exceeds the industry's most stringent controls. What's more the quality of our product is exceeded only by that of our service.

Try us and you'll understand why, when it comes to leading edge bus solutions, there's no stopping us.



OPTIMUM, THAT'S OPTARE



Pointers were choice for Pullman's York Easylink service, forming 80% of tendered city services

York contract accompanied by new training regime at DTS subsidiary

Six new buses mark growth

By Andrew Jarosz

DURHAM Travel Services' subsidiary York Pullman has launched six lowfloor Dennis Darts this week on services tendered by York City Council.

The bus and coach operator bought the vehicles as a result of signing of a five-year contract worth around £250,000 per year to provide daytime and evening

services in the city.

Three 9.2 metre 29-seaters and three 10 metre 33-seaters operate four daytime routes, three evening routes and three Sunday routes which represent around 80% of the tendered network, and these have been extended through the tender process to include additional commercial links. Hitherto, the Elvington based independent was lim-

ited to one secured service, alongside private hire, school contract and sightseeing work.

All the daytime routes pass through the city centre and require five vehicles, the evening routes radiate from the city centre and the Sunday routes involve two radial services and a third circular route. Most other routes are operated commercially by Rider York.

The York tender win builds upon DTS' recent success in the Tyne and Wear area, where the three year 'care call' contract was captured in July. This involves 26 Renault Master 'ambulance' conversions being operated on hospital and accessible services from the company's main Hetton-Hole base.

DTS managing director Peter Lee said that the com-

pany was building on the success of operating its one tendered route in York for the last 18 months, and is training staff in line with industry policy to NVQ 2.

"We have distributed 76,500 timetable inserts door to door, and are holding some opening promotions and competitions to build up customer awareness of our network in the city."

Quiz Otley contested

BRITANNIA TRAVEL of Otley, West Yorkshire, is the lucky winner in the CBW prize-draw for a free closed-circuit TV reversing camera.

The competition was run in each of CBW's and this magazine dated 16 October 1997.

Readers were asked to match three Pugh cartoons with their correct caption and, Britannia partner, Antony Broome, was first out of the sack full of entries.

Britannia, a small company which started on 1 April 1990, will have the CCTV system fitted to their J-reg Setra by Utopia Electronics of Guildford.

Picked for prestige



COACH AND BUS WEEK
**COACH
INDUSTRY
AWARDS**
1998
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

VOLVO dealership Yeates is aiming for the top when it sponsors the Large Fleet Operator of the Year category at January's *Coach Industry Awards*.

"We have picked a category which we feel is appropriate to a dealership like ours," said Yeates md Bill Russell. "It is one of the prestige awards of the year, and we feel it compliments one of the country's major dealerships."

Selling Volvo's premium heavyweight coach chassis, the B10M, has brought Yeates into direct contact with some of the country's biggest and best coach operators, such as previous award win-

ners Clarkes of London, and Epsom Coaches. "But we are always trying to keep the balance between serving the small fleet operators and the giants," said Mr Russell. "Sponsorship of the Coach Industry Awards event does that, because the event attracts a good cross-section of the industry."

"We believe that the coach awards are instrumental in raising the standards of the industry and encourage operators to take pride in the quality of their products and service."

Mr Russell said he was particularly pleased that the ceremony is returning to the Stakis Metropole, near the NEC, Birmingham: "To have a central location like the Stakis Metropole is essential," he said.

"It is an excellent venue, with the kind of prestige associated with the awards. We are looking forward to an enjoyable evening."



Russell: 'excellent venue'

Tour operator goes it alone after ten-year deal Williamsons loses out as GTL turns coach operator

By Mark Williams

A TEN-YEAR relationship between Group Travel Limited and Williamsons of Oswestry is about to end, with GTL deciding to run its own vehicles.

The Shropshire and West Midlands tour operator had hired an average of three coaches from Williamsons to handle its 6,000 annual

coach holidays to the UK and Europe. But now, it has a six-vehicle O licence and intends to provide coach transport for its own holiday programme.

First of the vehicles are three Berkhof Axials, the first two of which have been delivered (CBW, 13 November) and the third set to arrive in March. All are purchased B10M's on main-

tenance contract with Volvo.

"It's not a major problem, comprising only about 30% of our turnover and 10% of our profit," said Williamsons' proprietor Howard Williamson. "We are already looking at two tour contract offers. They must be able to support running top-quality, air-conditioned vehicles."

Director of GTL, Paul Ben-

nett, said the new coaches will be working on the group travel side of its business through winter, starting the holiday programme in late January and would be joined by others for the main season.

"They were originally purchased for and incoming tour contract next year but have had to be reallocated," he told CBW.



GTL took three Axials and may have more next year as its tour programme grows

Late pay for trio of drivers

THREE bus drivers were awarded redundancy payments by Silverline Coaches at a Cardiff Industrial Tribunal hearing.

The Brecon based coach company began trading in 1986, serving the area with local bus services and private hire. Mr Howarth, director and sole trader of Silverline ceased trading due to his wife's illness.

Mr Stuart McDermot and Mr Carey, drivers for the company disputed payments for the hours they had worked. Mr Marney representing the applicants told the tribunal that sometimes they worked over the 40 hours they were scheduled to work, sometimes 50 hours. Mr Howarth said they were never forced to work over 40 hours.

Mr McDermot, Carew Close, Castle Park, Merthyr was awarded £4049.12. Mr Carey's settlement was for £2,664.68. Mr McDermot is now employed by Stagecoach and Mr Carey has left bus driving to work for a garage.

Mrs Carey who also worked for Silverline was awarded £290.32 and is also currently employed by Stagecoach.

Retrofit air is a soft option say tests

AN AFTER-MARKET air suspension system for minibuses has passed independent tests with flying colours.

Glide-Rite suspension - invented and sold by Hampshire operator AMK - got the once-over at MIRA in direct comparison with manufacturer's leaf springs and came out well ahead on passenger comfort. The icing on the cake was a separate report which confirmed that the system is built to last.

"When the system was devised, we thought the 'kneeling' facility would be its selling point," said md Kevin Moger. "But increasingly, we find operators are interested in the ride quality it gives."

MIRA fitted its specially-made Ridemeter aboard a Glide-Rite-fitted Fiat Ducato and an identical, factory-fitted Ducato: "There is a

noticeable improvement in both the secondary ride quality - frequencies of 4Hz and above - and the impact harshness over discreet features,"

the report concludes.

Manchester Metropolitan University then linked the Glide-Rite system up to a test rig which simu-

lated a fully-laden vehicle hitting the kerb 4,000 times, and reported no discernible wear or faults. This, backed up with 150,000 miles' operating experience aboard a number of AMK's 50-plus fleet, based in Liphook, underlines the reliability, says Kevin Moger.

Glide-Rite, costing under £2,000 per vehicle, is simply fitted in conjunction with existing leaf springs. It can be fitted to the majority of minibus bodies, and since the August launch, has been supplied for 70 vehicles.

"Increasingly, we're being approached by conversion specialists who want Glide-Rite for community transport vehicles, and for minicoaches," said Mr Moger.

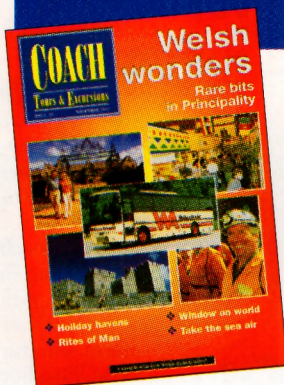
What's new on the accessible transport scene? Turn to pages 12 & 13 for the latest show news



First Glide-Rite went on to operator AMK's Renault Master

COACH TOURS AND EXCURSIONS

Reader Research



WIN A BOTTLE OF CHAMPAGNE

Go ahead treat yourself to an early Christmas present

As a coach operator, CBW's monthly magazine, *Coach Tours & Excursions*, tells you everything you need to know about where, when and how to take your customers on tours and excursions throughout the UK and abroad.

Now, in return for answering a few questions, you could win a bottle of Moët Champagne and enjoy a quick sip before the Christmas rush. Did you receive the November issue of *Coach Tours & Excursions*? If not, you must fill in the form anyway to make sure you're on the mailing list for the next bumper issue. Don't risk missing a great magazine which is free to all CBW's coach operator subscribers.

Don't forget, return the form today, postage is completely paid, and you could be our winner.

1. How long have you been receiving *Coach Tours & Excursions*?
(Please tick)

3 years... ☐ 2 years... ☐ 1 year... ☐ Less than 1 year... ☐

2. I do not receive the magazine and wish to be on the mailing list... ☐

3. How long do you normally spend reading your copy of *Coach Tours and Excursions*? (Please tick)

Over 30 minutes... ☐ Up to 30 minutes... ☐ Up to 15 minutes... ☐ Less than 5 minutes... ☐ Don't read... ☐

4. How useful do you find the following articles in *Coach Tours and Excursions*?

	Very useful	Fairly useful	Not very useful	Not at all useful	Do not read
Trade Talk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Deal and Discounts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
City Fax	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Regional Information	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Points of View	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Information on:					
Theatres	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Castles	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stately homes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zoos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beach resorts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resorts	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hotels	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ferries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Museums	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. What would you like to see covered in *Coach Tours & Excursions* that is not currently covered?

1 2
3 4
5 6
7 8

6. On a scale of 1-5, how do you rate the usefulness of *Coach Tours and Excursions* to you and your business? (Tick which one applies)

1... ☐ 2... ☐ 3... ☐ 4... ☐ 5... ☐

7. What venues/places do you plan on visiting in the next 12 months?

1 2
3 4
5 6
7 8

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Return this form to: Mike Morgan, Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, Freepost PE1131, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS

First corridor uses nine PMT buses

Potteries takes the partnership route

By Mark Williams

THE QUALITY PARTNERSHIP route continues to find favour and the latest agreement is in North Staffordshire with PMT.

The FirstBus operator and Stoke-on-Trent City Council, Staffordshire County Council and Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council formally launched the partnership in a ceremony at the company's headquarters in Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent.

The agreement commits PMT to a £1.25million investment in nine

lowfloor buses to service a transport corridor from Kidsgrove and Whitehill to Packmoor, then on to the City Centre via Turnhurst and High Lane, before going on to Fenton, Longton and Meir Park.

The local authorities £500,000 commitment includes modified kerbs, and improve bus stop and waiting facilities.

"There has never been a more exciting time for public transport. We are seeing the renaissance of the bus," said PMT operations director Mike Frewer. "The challenge now is



FirstBus PMT and local authorities sign up to quality

to make public transport more attractive to the private motorist. Quality Partnerships between transport operators and local authorities are an important way forward."

Stoke-on-Trent City Council's assistant director of engineering Steve Tams said the work would include a hi-tech system to monitor traffic.

Mysterious death of Volvo fitter at Shearings

POLICE are investigating the mysterious death of a Volvo body technician, Paul Brooks, who was found dead last weekend at Shearings' Bedworth depot.

The 32-year-old was found by a Shearings

employee in an inspection pit, trapped beneath a fork-lift truck.

He was believed to have been working alone, and was pronounced dead shortly after 11 am.

"Full circumstances lead-

ing to the death of Mr Brooks are not known at this time, but inquiries will continue with the Health and Safety Executive," said a Warwickshire police spokesman. Mr Brooks was married with two children.

RM safe until 2002

LONDON General has retained one of London's most famous bus routes - run with two-man operated Routemasters - for a further five years.

Route 11 serves Liverpool Street Station-Fulham to link

many of the capital's landmarks including the Bank of England, Trafalgar Square, Whitehall, Parliament Square and the King's Road. It was introduced in 1906 by London General, running open-top B-type buses.

MOSELEY

COMPREHENSIVE USED STOCK LIST ON REQUEST

Distributors of VOLVO • VAN HOOL • BOVA Luxury Coaches

1995 (November) IVECO EUROMIDI INDCAR ECO-3

35 seats (30 reclining and 5 fixed at rear), grey/orange moquette, complete with seat belts, tinted side windows, curtains, AIR CONDITIONING, continental door, coffee machine, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished silver/yellow/orange. M.O.T. OCTOBER 1998

1992 SCANIA K93 CRB VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

51/55 recliners, beige/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, Webasto pre-heater, wired TV/video finished all white. M.O.T. MARCH 1998

1991 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. OCTOBER 1998

1991 (August) DAF MB230 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

44/46 recliners, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, TV monitor/wired video, seat belts, servery with double fridge, water boiler, sink, microwave oven, coffee machine power entrance door, Webasto, finished all white. M.O.T. AUGUST 1998

1989 (August) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

51 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, wired TV/video, finished white/blue. M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1998

1989 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, aircraft style lockers to hatracks, water boiler, fridge, wired TV/video, TELMA retarder, finished all white. M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1989 BOVA FUTURA FHD 12.290 INTEGRAL 12M

49 recliners, red/grey/black moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, driver's sleeping berth, drink's machine, wired TV/video, finished all white. M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1989 DAF SB2300 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-DH 12M

51 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, twin TV monitors/wired video, power entrance door, low driving position, finished all white. M.O.T. MARCH 1998

1988 DAF SB3000 JONCKHEERE P599 12M

51 Vogel recliners, grey/red/blue moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. MAY 1998

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet O/S rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished cream/grey. M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1988 LAG PANORAMIC INTEGRAL 12M

49 recliners, grey/yellow/beige moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, coolbox, wired TV/video, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished all white. M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1987 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

49 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished silver. M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

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A MEMBER OF UK'S LARGEST INDEPENDENT COACH SALES ORGANISATION

Mark Williams is illuminated by the latest access trends at Blackpool

Mobility moves forward

A LINE-UP of Britain's best accessible minibuses and minicoaches filled the Blackpool venue for the Community Transport Association's annual show.

Like the commercial show Coach and Bus 97, Minibus & Accessible Transport featured a large number of all-new vehicles. If there was a theme, it was that coachbuilt buses are in the ascendancy.

Several exhibitors focussed their efforts on air suspension, one builder showing off a wheelchair-accessible

minibus which has already caught the attention of the Department of Environment, Transport and the Regions' Mobility Unit. Another exhibitor was showing off a rear air suspension package which can be retrofitted to a range of currently leaf-sprung vehicles.

There were familiar faces there, too, with Robbie Hood showing off the sister of his RH models, and UVG with the first fruits of a restructuring and investment programme. Mellor, flushed with suc-

cess with its Opus midicoach launched at Coach and Bus 97, was showing off another Iveco - this time, the first-ever fully certified M2 seatbelt fitment built on a new tracking system.

Perhaps the most hopeful news was that Prime Minister Tony Blair has written to local authorities asking them to focus more attention on the quality of their services. In the long term, let's hope there's some money behind the plea.

First with coachbuilt M2 spec

MELLOR claims to be the first accessible vehicle manufacturer to have achieved full M2 standard on a range of coachbuilt minibuses.

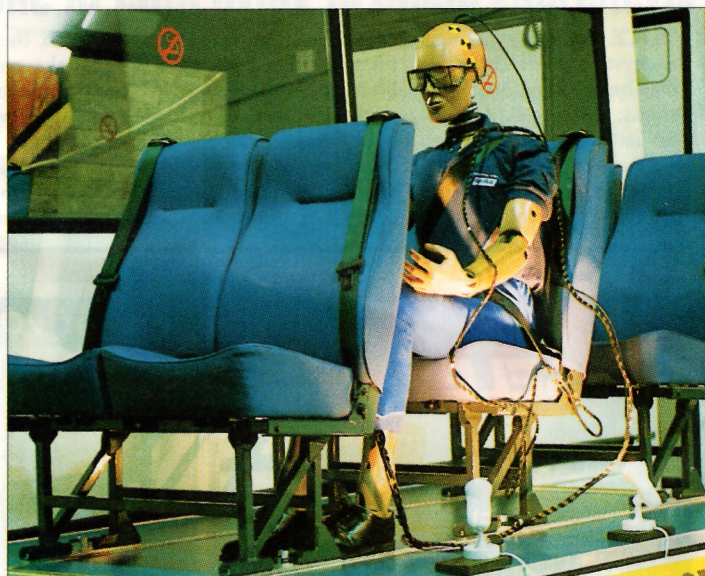
"Operators perhaps don't understand that M2 tracking plus M2 seat equals M2 tested, but this is not strictly true," said Mellor's John Mulhern. "The whole vehicle has to be tested to be sure of safety."

Mellor's initial crash tests sent it back to the drawing board as it re-examined the tracking. The result was the Mellordec system, with its specially-made, wide-based tracking. After redesigning the sub-frame, recent testing resulted in full approval for Mellor-built vehicles on Mercedes-Benz 6 series and Vario, Iveco 49.10 and 59.12, and Renault Messenger.

The strength of the system lies chiefly in the tracking, which is bolted with three high-tensile steel bolts at each securing point, directly into the floor frame. The ply flooring is laid over the wide, flanged base of the tracking.

"If customers want safe vehicles, the only way is to test the complete vehicle," said Mr Mulhern. "Surprisingly, there is no cost penalty for buying our vehicle, and tracking is compatible with Unwin's seat belting systems."

Five Iveco-based M2 vehicles are already in service in Lancashire County Council and Edinburgh has ordered 20. The show vehicle - a 49.10-based 20-seater with tail lift and full Mellordec system, is priced at £46,000.



No dummies: Mellor took belt, tracking and bus through crash test



Chassis lowdown: rear is coachbuilt, lowfloor and on chassis

RoMoBus ready to roll

ROHILL'S RoMoBus lowfloor mobility vehicle was 'designed' by the people who will eventually use it, said md Brian Robinson.

"The concept of fitting a lowfloor chassis to an existing chassis cowl is not new," said Mr Robinson. "We brought the chassis concept with us to last year's show, then talked to disabled people and buyers about what they wanted... even Glenda Jackson MP had a say when she attended the launch of the West Midlands vehicles."

The essence of the RoMoBus (CBW, 13 November) is a fully galvanised, bolted chassis carrying a proven air suspension system developed several years ago by Rohill and

Drinkwater Developments.

The combination allows the built vehicle's deck to be lowered to a foot high, leaving a shallow ramp angle for wheelchair boarding via the rear - a cassette ramp was fitted to the show example. By using a side door to approach kerbing, an almost level entry can be achieved.

"It beats most other mobility buses because it doesn't have the stigma of the wheelchair lift, and being lowfloor, is easy for the ambulant elderly to board," said Mr Robinson.

The Andover-based company is to move home next August, when it transfers to a full, flow-line factory to keep up with production.



Robin Hood: on target with RH Welfare Bus addition to midi range

Styling draws mobility market to new RH

WITH mobility transport providers looking for style appeal, Robin Hood Vehicle Industry's RH2000 was bound to attract attention.

Now, the Hampshire-based body builder has produced the RH Welfare Bus - the same attractive front end as its popular midicoach and the same build quality but with an electric, folding side door and wheelchair

tail lift.

The vehicle is available on Iveco 49.10 and 59.12, Cannon Softline and Mercedes-Benz Vario chassis cowl and like its coach sister, comes with corrosion-proofing and foam injection insulation. All the usual RH2000 extras can be fitted if needed, though the standard vehicle comes with vinyl flooring, Unwin

tracking, wheelchair lift floodlight and top sliders on the windows.

"Visitors have been most impressed with the height of the interior, in which most people can walk without stooping," said Robbie Hood. "Hackney, which is taking three like the show vehicle and has the option of three more, was particularly impressed with the styling."



Defender 2: twin seatbelt can replace harnesses

Titan solves a vandal problem

A NEW minibus seat from Rescroft could help solve seat belt vandalism problems.

The Defender Titan incorporates a three-point belt, height adjustable for children. With many seats, that's asking for trouble, particularly vandalism of the belt where it stretches down the back of the seat to the inertia reel.

On the Titan, the belt and the reel are hidden within the seat back, preventing much of the worse vandalism. What's more, the seat can be covered in vandal-proof vinyls including the Wardle Storey Ambula design shown here.

The second new, M2-tested seat at the show was Rescroft's Defender 2, which has particular appeal to the disabled market because it carries a double lap-and-diagonal belt, which Rescroft says makes a neater alternative to the usual harness.

All Rescroft seats can be fitted with grab rails, armrest and headrests, including the adjustable, plastic skeleton headrest shown here, which can be produced in a variety of colours.



New look Mobility on Merc

UVG sends midis to Bedwas plant

UVG has invested £0.5 million in line-build facilities at the former Bedwas factory, now UVG Wales, which will now handle all Vario-based midibuses.

The change also focusses the Newport factory on its security and prison transfer vehicles, and on its accessible minibus products such as its restyled, stainless-steel-framed Mobility body, on display in two versions at the show together with three of the original Mobility bodies.

Built on the bigger Mercedes-Benz and Iveco chassis cowl, the New Look Mobility body is framed with stainless steel, while smaller conversions such as LDV Convoy, Sprinter and Transit are framed with aluminium.

Restyling includes smoother lines to the front, but it's beneath the skin that there have been substantial changes, including a change to jig-built sides and the use of stainless and aluminium. Models are now being tested to M2 standard throughout.



Smaller and vandal-proof

Little wonder

CARSTYLE'S constant search for improvement has come up with a new, smaller inertia reel for its belt systems. Carstyle md David Lamb explained that the larger version invited vandalism and, protruding from the seat when fitted, was prone to damage.



Mouse that: UK market is boosting attendance figures

More rooms at inn at Disney

AN EIGHT PER CENT increase in attendances and a rise in hotel occupancy has been revealed by Euro Disney, the operator of Disneyland Paris, in its financial results for the year ending 30 September.

The French theme park attracted 12.6 million visitors in the 12-month period - a 7.7% increase on the corresponding period in 1996 - and hotel occupancy was at

78%, up by 5.8%. The increase in attendance has been helped by a marked increase in the number of visitors from the UK, which now accounts for a major slice of the group market.

Income for the fiscal year, before lease and financial charges, was up 21.5% to FF 880 million, and the park's net income was up 7.5% to FF 217 million.

New deals and group price freeze add edge Stena launches coach savings

By William Golden

BIG savings and a fares freeze are being offered to group operators by Stena Line on its Dover-Calais service in 1998.

Operators who book a Coachsaver crossing can save up to £370 on standard return fares. Coachsaver fares, which are valid on night sailings between 7.30pm and 5.15am, are £340 for a single-decker coach and £420 for a double-decker, including passengers. These compare to peak season returns of £650 and £790 respectively.

The prices of 72-hour Coachsaver crossings have also been reduced, with fares starting at £249 for a single-

decker coach and £350 for a double-decker. These represent savings of £251 and £240 respectively.

On the Newhaven-Dieppe service, single-deck coach fares on the ferry are from £320 return for a 72-hour excursion, and from £450 for a standard return. Minibuses can travel on the Lynx high-speed catamaran and fares are from £120 and £200 for 72-hour excursions and standard returns respectively.

In an industry first, Stena Line's Coach & Group Guide 98 also introduces a new customer service guarantee, which sets out the minimum service levels and operator can expect when transacting business with the company. This also covers

compensation payments, should there be sailing delays, amendments or cancellations.

David Stamp, national sales manager, said: "With better exchange rates and consumers feeling more confident about taking a holiday, market confidence is now much higher than 12 months ago."

"Dover-Calais has had a very good year and early indications are that 1998 will be even better, especially with the impetus offered by England and Scotland both qualifying for the World Cup Finals in France."

For bookings and more information contact Stena's group sales department on 0990 204402.



Haven: visit Abbotsbury

Hurry on down to Swannery

SWANS, tropical gardens and a farm are among the attractions awaiting groups in Abbotsbury. The coach-friendly Dorset village offers free parking and a range of special group deals at its three principal attractions - The Swannery, the Sub Tropical Gardens and the Tithe Barn Children's Farm.

Visits may be combined with a tour of the village which boasts a pottery, wood crafting centre and teddy bear shop.

● **More information from John Houston at the Abbotsbury Tourism Office, West Yard Barn, West Street, Abbotsbury, Dorset DT3 4JT, tel 01305 871130 (fax 01305 871092).**

Treble top for holidays

BAKERS DOLPHIN marked the launch of its 1998 holiday programmes by embarking on a major marketing offensive that attracted thousands of prospective customers.

The Weston-super-Mare coach operators held eight launch evenings in Weston and Frome to promote the three main programmes - Summer Tours, Ziptrips and Highland Magic. More than 3,000 people attended the sell-out shows and Bakers Dolphin reported brisk bookings.

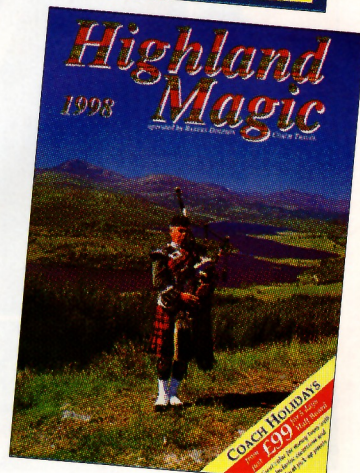
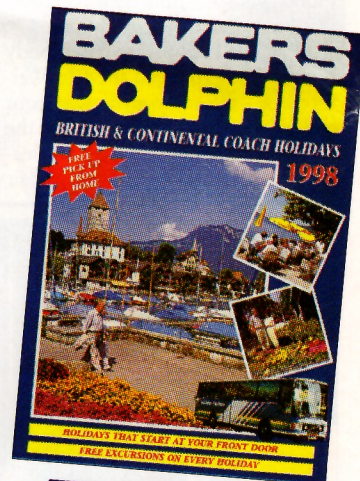
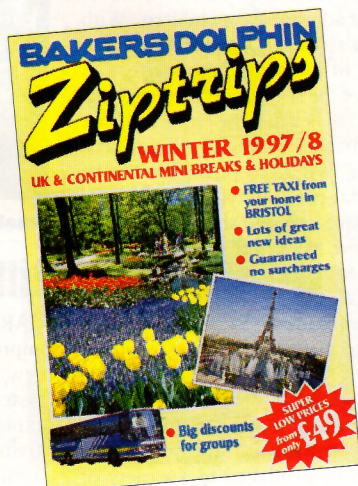
The company also used the evenings to premiere a 20-minute video highlighting its product range, which includes a Days Out programme, private hire and a London Flyer service. The video features local personality Fred Wedlock, who is seen with his wife on location in Paris and Dublin. Stephen Rodgers European Marketing was engaged to work on the concept and script, and the film will be used in presentations to private groups.

This year has been a successful one for Bakers Dolphin, with the company reporting summer holiday tours up by 10% on 1996, and the short-break programme, Ziptrips, up by more than 15% on previous years.

The 64-page, 1998 Summer programme is the biggest yet and features more than 50 destinations. The Continental programme has been expanded on the back of the strength of sterling and new tours have been added to Switzerland, Austria, the south of France and Brittany.

Amanda Harrington, holidays tours manager, said: "The House Full signs went up well in advance of the launch parties and all eight shows sold out."

"Based on on the number of bookings that we actually took during the shows, we are hopeful that the same will happen to the tours."



to price war on the short-sea Channel crossings



Fares fare: Stena Line is offering operators considerable reductions via its Coachsaver programme

Capital offer on the buses

AN ALL-IN-ONE pass is offering free travel on Cardiff's buses to attract tourists to top attractions.

The Cardiff Card, launched next Easter, aims to aid tourism across the Welsh capital and beyond into the South Wales Valleys. Inclusive in the entry to 20 visitor attractions will be Cardiff Bus and Valley Line train travel.

It will cost £11 a day and is based on similar passports to tourism in Stockholm, Copenhagen and Berlin. Discounts on shopping, meals and entertainment will also be offered to day-trippers buying the card. A two-day pass, costing £18.50, and a three-day pass priced at £24 will also be available.

Frank Yates, md of Cardiff Bus, said: "It is an imaginative scheme and it deserves to succeed."

Special interest packages in Leger programme

MORE than 65 itineraries are included in an expanded 1998 European coach holiday programme from Leger. It features city breaks, special interest packages and trips of up to 16 days in duration.

The new special interest packages include the four-day Battlefields of the First World War from £129 per person. This comprises three nights' accommodation with breakfast; excursions to The Somme, Ypres, Passchendaele and Vimy

Ridge; and return coach travel from more than 300 pick-up points. The tour, which is fully escorted, and is available from 10 April until 2 October.

Other special interest holidays include Paris and the Gardens of France, from £159, and Sequence Dancing Breakaways, with prices from £199 per person.

City breaks start at £89 for the three-day Paris City Hopper, or the Four Star Bruges and Gent

itineraries, while the five-day Bruges, Brussels and Ostend packages leads in at £139 per person.

Longer tour destinations include Barcelona and Scenic Catalonia and The Island of Elba - Jewel of the Mediterranean. Both are 10-day tours and the Spanish lead-in price is £289 per person, while prices start from £329 a head to Elba. The rate comprises return coach travel, nine nights' bed and breakfast accommodation, plus selected evening meals and excursions.



EUROWATCH

WEATHER

DIESEL PRICES

HOLIDAY POUND

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
AA Out and About with AA Roadwatch											
Amsterdam	9C/48F	Madrid	8C/46F	Austria	0.47	Luxembourg	0.37	Austria	20.12 Sch/£	Italy	2,815 Lire/£
Athens	20C/68F	Oslo	7F/45F	Belgium	0.48	Netherlands	0.47	Belgium	58.97 BFr/£	Netherlands	3.21 Gld/£
Berlin	6C/43F	Paris	7C/45F	Eire	0.52	Norway	0.63	Denmark	10.95 K/£	Norway	11.67 NKr/£
Brussels	7C/45F	Rome	15C/59F	France	0.45	Portugal	0.40	Eire	1.095 Punt/£	Portugal	291 Es/£
Dublin	7C/45F	Stockholm	7C/45F	Germany	0.42	Spain	0.40	France	9.56 F/£	Spain	240 Pta/£
Lisbon	18C/64F	Vienna	8C/46F	Greece	0.38	Sweden	0.54	Germany	2.86 DM/£	Sweden	12.56 SKr/£
Luxembourg	6C/43F	Zurich	7/45F	Italy	0.54	Switzerland	0.53	Greece	451 D/£	Switzerland	2.33 SFr/£

Chesterfield operator fined £500 for having defective brakes

Ministry spotcheck revealed offside rear brake not working



MAINTENANCE

USING a bus with defective brakes has led to Chesterfield based Alfred Crofts being ordered to pay fines and costs totalling £500.

Mr Crofts, who trades as North Midland Buses, of 29 Netherthorpe Farm Cottages, Lowgates, Chesterfield, admitted the offence before the Chesterfield Magistrates.

Prosecuting for the DoT Vehicle Inspectorate, John Heaton said that a single decked Bristol bus on a regular service had been stopped in a Ministry check at Clay Cross on 24 September. A vehicle examiner saw that the offside rear brakes were inoperative by looking through the inspection hole in the back plate and feeling the operation of the brakes. The brake drum was cold. The linings of the nearside rear brakes were also worn away. These patent defects could be seen at the roadside from the most elementary of checks, said Mr Heaton. The vehicle, which was carrying passengers, had to be taken out of service. It was given an immediate prohibition notice and it

was directed to return at low speed to base a few hundred yards away.

Mr Crofts said that he had hired the vehicle from Stephen Naylor and Roger Handbury, trading as Matlock Bus Co, of Danesmoor, Chesterfield, and it was they who carried out the maintenance every six weeks. The driver, John Cash, was an experienced driver of around 30 years experience. He now knew that the offside rear brakes had had a broken wedge. That had not been known to him at the time, though he was aware that the linings were worn on the nearside. He was not a mechanic and he had relied upon the skill and judgement of Mr Naylor, who was the mechanic for Matlock Bus. Each of his vehicles carried a defect report sheet, and though defects had been reported no fault to the brakes had been.

In reply to Mr Heaton, Mr Crofts agreed that there as a steep hill on the Holmewood to Clay Cross route.

Mr Naylor said that he had 12-and-a-half years experience as a mechanic, having trained with South Yorkshire Transport. Mr Handbury dealt with the administration and

scheduling side of Matlock Bus and he dealt with the mechanical side. He had personally serviced the bus concerned. They had purchased it from Chesterfield Car Auctions and he understood that it had been seized and sold by the Sheriff. They had agreed to supply the bus to Mr Crofts. Originally a six week inspection period had been suggested but he had advised Mr Crofts that that should be reduced to four weeks in view of the age of the bus.

The bus had been inspected on 29 July, the day before it was put into service, said Mr Naylor, and everything was in order with the brakes. On 1 September it was noticed that the linings on the nearside rear brakes were 80% worn. In his view they had not needed immediate replacement although they would need replacing soon, and he advised Mr Crofts accordingly. He had felt that the nearside brakes would be alright until the next safety inspection in four weeks time.

As far as the offside rear brakes were concerned, he had stripped down the brakes after the check and he had found what he thought was a

fresh break on the wedge which had fractured, said Mr Naylor. One of the brake shoes was not moving at all. The top corner of the wedge had snapped off. There was no grease on the fracture and he was unable to say whether it was a new or old fracture, but he thought that it might be new because of the lack of grease. He was unable to find the bit of wedge that had broken off.

On a normal safety inspection he would just look at the linings through the hole, said Mr Naylor. The driver would only know that the brakes were not operating correctly but would not know the cause. He did not consider that there was any way that Mr Crofts would have known of the brake defects.

Questioned by Mr Heaton, Mr Naylor agreed that it was an elderly bus, first registered in 1980, the history of which he did not know save that it had been seized by the Sheriff presumably for non-payment of a debt. He agreed that it would have been prudent to strip the brakes down by taking off the drums and looking at them. He accepted that



Commissioner Pugh said Area Office must be notified of address change

'Vanishing' operator



LICENCE

THE West Midlands Traffic Commissioner has restored the authorisation on the licence held by Leicestershire school bus operator Steven Heath to two vehicles at a Birmingham public inquiry.

The authorisation was cut to one vehicle when the Commissioner lifted the licence suspension imposed when Mr Heath, trading as Omega Travel, of 48 Charnwood Road, Barwell, Leicester, failed to attend an earlier hearing. (CBW, 25 September) In lifting the suspension John Mervyn Pugh warned that if investigations with the Post Office disproved Mr Heath's claims that he never received a recorded letter notifying him of the inquiry his licence would be revoked

(CBW, 9 October).

When Mr Heath again appeared before the Commissioner, Mr Pugh said that he would be pleased to know that there had not been a Post Office investigation as it had turned out that the letters were not sent by recorded delivery.

After Mr Pugh had commented that the problem had been that Mr Heath was "somewhat of a vanishing operator", Mr Heath said he now had an office address and they would monitor his telephone calls and contact him on his mobile phone. He had split up with his wife and that had caused a lot of the problems.

One bus had just had a fresh MoT test and the other was still in bits, said Mr Heath. He had bought the latter for £30,000. It was a "snatch back" by a finance



Maintenance checks were carried out every six weeks by Matlock Bus of Chesterfield

if the wedge had been broken in July he would have seen it if he had stripped the brakes down. He agreed that to take the drums off was not a big job and that only the most cursory check was possible by looking through the back plate of the brakes. He conceded that the defect on the offside brake might have put further strain on the near-side brakes so that the linings wore prematurely.

Mr Naylor said that from the servicing records the vehicle had travelled approximately 3,000 miles during August and that the mileage was likely to be similar up to the date of the offence. He agreed that it would be unlikely for the linings to have worn from 20% to an illegal state in only 3,000 miles. He accepted that he might have made a mistake about the thickness of the lining left when he did the September check. He was

unaware of the financial details of the contract with Mr Crofts as his partner dealt with that aspect. He accepted that he was responsible for the safe operation of the vehicle and that he had not removed the brake drums at any time.

For Mr Crofts, John King argued that there was no evidence that he actually knew of the brake defect nor was there any way that he could reasonably have known.

regains second authorisation

company. He had stripped it right down and was in the process of going right through it. He hoped to have it ready for MoT test by the end of the month. He would send the MoT certificate to the Traffic

Mr Heath said it was a good reliable vehicle and he had spent £39,000 on its maintenance and repair.

Producing letters of support from schools and parents, Mr

Producing letters of support from schools and parents, Mr Heath said that he understood there had been an anonymous complaint about the condition of his vehicle

Area Office before he started to run the bus.

Agreeing that the vehicle he was running was an old 1979 vehicle,

Heath said that he understood there had been an anonymous complaint about the condition of his vehicle.

Agreeing that was so, Mr Pugh

said the Traffic Area received complaints from time to time and they had to be looked into.

Mr Heath said that he looked after the vehicle as best he could, particularly after the last public inquiry. He had spent a lot of money on the vehicle and he planned to strip it down and go right through it at some time in the future.

Restoring the second vehicle, Mr Pugh commented that the letters produced by Mr Heath were letters to be proud of. One of the problems had been finding Mr Heath and if he moved again he must notify the Traffic Area.

He had gained a new contract for the carriage of disabled children which he then lost as a result of the last public inquiry, said Mr Heath. It had cost him a lot of money.

Driver loses unfair dismissal claim



TRIBUNAL

A SWANSEA bus driver has lost his claim for unfair dismissal against South Wales Transport Co Ltd after being sacked for malingering.

John Lake, of 2 Manson Street, Swansea, was dismissed by the company, of Heol Gwrysydd, Penlann. Swansea, West Glamorgan, in May.

For Mr Lake, Gareth Jones said that he had first been employed by the company as a conductor in 1961. In July 1979 he became a driver before leaving the company after an accident in 1986. He returned to work for the company in 1991 and was subsequently off work due to a back problem. He was dismissed after the company had refused his request for light duties.

South Wales Transport's personnel manager Viv Wenders, said that he had seen Mr Lake hobbling about

Alan Kreppel said that employees became disenchanted if they saw that others were malingering

the Quadrant Bus Station in Swansea but when he saw him outside his house he was walking enthusiastically and with no apparent difficulty. Because his suspicions had been aroused, and Mr Lake appeared to be malingering, he called in a private investigator.

Managing director Alan Kreppel said that employees became disenchanted if they saw that others were malingering and the company had used inquiry agents in the past in similar circumstances.

Leo Markham, former business development manager for South Wales Transport and current managing director designate of Rhondda Buses, said that when Mr Wenders had visited Mr Lake in March he had asked him if he would return to work on light duties. Mr Lake's request for light duties was made in May when his entitlement to sick pay was about to run out.

Holding that the dismissal was fair, a Swansea Industrial Tribunal said that Mr Lake had had ample opportunity under the company's procedures to produce medical evidence concerning his condition but had failed to do so.

Are there any statistics comparing accident rates?

Q Following a recent local incident in which a double decker overturned when carrying 70 school children, I was minded to write a letter to the local press to point out that double deckers are probably the safest vehicles on the road. Unlike a single deck vehicle, if they do overturn, it will only be on to their side, not rolling on to the roof and perhaps collapsing. Are there any statistics comparing accident rates for double and single deckers and mini-buses?
RR, Inverness

a The Government do publish annual figures of road accidents, but I have never seen the full document, only summaries. I doubt that the PCV figures are split by vehicle type, not least of all because the number PCV related incidents are far lower than any of the other vehicle types. The PCV figures for 1996 (1995 in brackets) were as follows: fatalities 11 (35) and serious injury 684 (800).

While you are obviously right in your comments about the improbability of a double decker turning on to its roof, I wonder whether any correspondence that even alludes to the possibility of PCV's turning over may increase concern in the minds of the travelling public, rather than persuade them that the PCV is inherently safe. Furthermore, you would leave yourself open to the retort that there is actually a greater risk of a double decker toppling over than a single deck vehicle. For the fact is that the tilt-test requirements for a double decker is that it must not overturn until it is 28 degrees or more out of vertical, whereas a single decker must remain stable until tilted to 35 degrees.

I am all in favour of operators taking the initiative in educating the local media, local politicians and the public about the excellent accident record of coaches and buses - but this is probably better accomplished when it is done from a positive position of strength. For example, when presenting safety awards to drivers.


Incidentally, never forget that it is not the vehicle type that keeps the accident record of our industry so impressive, it is achieved through training of drivers and their care, dedication and professionalism.

Dashing in to print after an accident (even one in which there were no fatalities or even serious injuries as was, I believe, the case in the incident to which you refer) may only serve to keep an undesirable 'story' running for longer than necessary. My view, with which you may not agree, is that unless you are sure that you can actually change peoples beliefs, letting them forget may be the better course.

What is the seatbelt law for coaches from another state?

Q We now have a law requiring seat-belts to be fitted to coaches when carrying groups of children. There is no equivalent law in mainland Europe. Can a coach operator from another EU state, using a coach not fitted with seat-belts: (a) carry a group of children from that State through to a destination in this country? (b) pick up a party of pupils in this coun-

marksman



YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o Coach and Bus Week, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154

Marksman will answer more questions on 4 December 1997

try under the cabotage arrangements and take them to a Continental destination?
PH, Wales

a If I gave awards for the question of the year, this one would win the award. Regulation 48A (2a) of the Construction & Use Regulations (Added by virtue of S.I. 1996 No.163) applies the seat-belt requirement to coaches and mini-buses when: 'the group of children are on an organised trip'. Sub-section (4) says: 'without prejudice to the generality of (what is quoted above), a group of children shall, for the purposes of this regulation, be regarded as being on an organised trip if they are being carried to or from their school or from one part of their school premises to another'. As I read this regulation, the words in (4) only clarify the fact that 'school transport' is an 'organised trip' and that the words 'organised trip' have a wide and general meaning, i.e. any journey arranged for the carriage of the children concerned.

On that count, the British seatbelt law would appear to apply to that part of any journey in this country, irrespective of the origin or destination of the passengers.

But do UK regulations apply to foreign vehicles? I have no doubt that they do, and vice versa.

Continental drivers are frequently before UK Courts for non-compliance with our national laws on drinking and driving, overloading, parking, weight limits etc. We do not allow 15m coaches in to Britain.

In reverse, Continental countries have laws which are alien to us, yet enforced against us when in mainland Europe, e.g. the restriction on carriage of children by coach in France on certain busy weekends, the need for drivers who wear glasses or contact lenses to be able to produce a spare set, not to mention the burdensome national VAT laws.

I therefore believe that British law does indeed apply to both the scenarios you describe - and should be enforced where the continentally operated coach is not fitted with the necessary number of seat-belts. (Although there is no requirement

to fit seat belts - yet - in mainland Europe, they may nevertheless be fitted and, generally speaking over there where they are fitted they must be used). We are entitled to expect a level playing field and, in relation to cabotage in particular, to allow operators from other States freedoms denied to us, is simply not acceptable.

Can I report outstanding debt to Commissioner?

Q An operator owes me quite a tidy sum of money and simply refuses to discuss payment with me, and that after a couple of bouncing cheques. I now see that the operator concerned has been listed by the Traffic Commissioner for Public Inquiry under Section 17 of the Public Passenger Vehicles Act 1981. Am I able to bring this debt to the attention of the Traffic Commissioner?
JM, Lincs

a You can, and I think you should, although it may not help recover the debt. If the Commissioner was not already alerted to possible problem about financial standing, this would flag it up. But the Commissioner's determination on financial standing has to be based on whether the operator has the necessary available capital and reserves, not on how he actually pays his bills. (There is a slight irony here that not paying bills actually increases cash in the bank and enhances financial standing for this test!). However, substantial evidence of non-payment could properly be taken in to account by a Traffic Commissioner in deciding whether an operator is of good repute.

There is one factor of which you should be aware: that natural justice requires a person attending a Public Inquiry to be given advance notice of matters against which he may wish to offer a defence.

As this Public Inquiry is already fixed, unless the Commissioner will adjourn it, he may feel unable to take your evidence in to account. Do not let this deter you from advising the Traffic Commissioner of the circumstances, but in future try and do it before the other party is listed for Public Inquiry.

What are tachograph rules when using 16 seater in UK?

Q We have an Iveco 49.12 van conversion 16 seater. It has a GVW of 5000 kg and is fitted with a tachograph. Do we have to use the tachograph on this vehicle when doing work in the UK?
TB, Berks

a You may have already worked the answer out from the detailed reply I gave to a question two weeks ago about using a 16 seater on an international journey. A vehicle suitable for carrying not more than 16 passengers and the driver is exempt not only from using a tachograph on work done in this Country; it is also exempt from complying with the EU driving hours rules.

Instead, driving a vehicle of this class is governed by the, easier to understand, 'domestic' driving hours rules.

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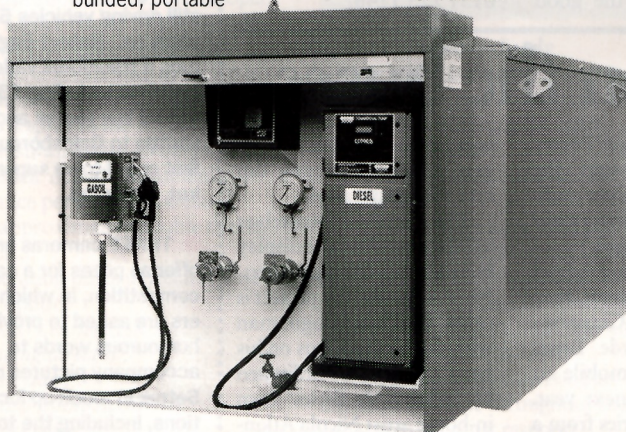
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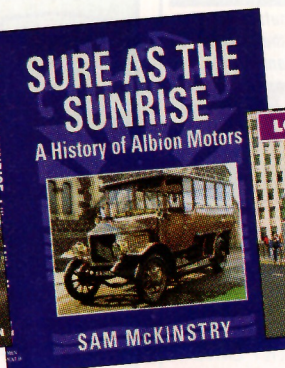
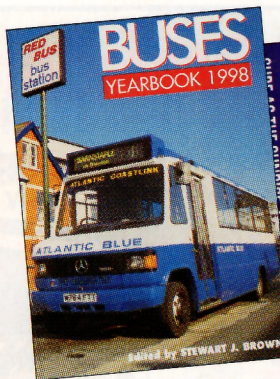
More in the life of Brian

AFTER a warm welcome at the LT lecture (CBW, 13 November) Brian Souter said this: "Thank you very much for the kind introduction and remarks."

"It reminded me of the story of the old Scotsman who had lived renegade life and was the village trouble-maker and fornicator... everything you could imagine was wrong about him."

"At his funeral, the coffin was at the front of the kirk, and the minister gave a tremendous oration about his life and what a great person he was. Half way through, his widow dug her son in the ribs and said

"Lift that lid and check if it's ye father that's in there..."



Stocking fillers: a choice of three books for the festive season

Christmas reading

WITH Christmas just around the corner, the wives and husbands of the industry will be glad of a handful of new books to reach the shops.

The words 'busman's holiday' spring to mind, but it is still a home truth that little more pleases the average man in the industry on his days off than a reminder of his (or her) job. Never write off the potential of a few pages of abject nostalgia to sooth the frayed nerves of Boxing Day.

As a book for that rare breed, the coach spotter, the *London Coach Handbook* takes some beating, but its value for anyone operating in and around the capital

should not be understated.

In essence, the distillation of the wisdom of authors Colin Lloyd, Jef Johnson and Keith Grimes is an excellent collection of colour pictures and an extensive fleet list for what appears to be every operator in London. *London Coach Handbook* is £15, published by Capital Transport on 0181 427 4707.

Buses Yearbook 1998 is a lot less practical, but an annual 'must' for enthusiasts and enthusiastic operators.

Edited by Stewart Brown, *Yearbook* suffers, I think, from suggesting topicality with its dateline while reveling in the past rather too much; where is the good

news, such as the great many lowfloors going into service? It's a small criticism, however, of what promises to be a good read. *Buses Yearbook* is £12.99 from Ian Allan, tel 01932 855909.

Sure As The Sunrise details the history of Albion Motors, from 1899 to the current day - an engineering splinter, *Albion Automotive*, still survives.

This is not just a book about Albion, but one about Scots engineers and Scotland. Its appeal will be broader than the title suggests.

Sure As The Sunrise is £25, published by John Donald of Edinburgh, on 0131 225 1146.

COACH AND BUS WEEK ENDING...

10 YEARS AGO

● ALLAN Edmonson, commercial director of Wessex Coaches of Bristol, introduces a five-year management training scheme to the company. He cites the disbanding of NBC schemes, and the need to fill the gap left.

● THIRD generation of the Safford family, Tracey Gillet, gets PCV driver training around Cambridge so she can fill in during holidays with the family firm. She follows in the tradition of her grandmother, Irene Safford, 73, who drove coaches for 50 years.

● BOTH GMB and pre-privatised Ribble Motor Services are now competing on the Bolton-Leigh service corridor. GMB is emphasising its historic continuity by adorning its buses with posters declaring it to be the 'Original 582'.

15 YEARS AGO

● COACHMART profiles Eagle Coaches of Gainsborough, whose founder is still driving vehicles 52 years on. Robert Eaglen runs a traditional variety of business including 13 school bus routes and a shuttle to Gainsborough's first out-of-town supermarket, Mainstop.

● THREE cameras are on offer as prizes for a caption competition, in which readers are asked to provide humorous words to accompany pictures of Setras in mock-up locations, including the top of Nelson's Column...

● IT'S a look back in anger for our rear-view mirror reviewer, who is a harsh critic of the poor quality of bus mirrors. But he loves the new CCTV system being marketed by Clarion.

● THE STAR of Yeates' annual show is the Galaxy HF Deluxe on B10M destined for Harry Shaws. Most unusual exhibit is an LAG Tristar, tri-axle mini-coach with a Mercedes-Benz engine.



Strathclyde Buses' md John McCormick, Adshel manager Julia Crosthwaite, Scottish Enterprise's Billy Harkins, and Glasgow City City Council Arts and Culture convenor Liz Cameron at the Bulkhead send-off

Art on the buses

WHO WILL forget Poetry on the Underground, the campaign for a larger audience which brought forward some excellent verse?

Well, FirstBus and Adshel have launched something similar now up in Glasgow - turning Strathclyde Buses 1,300 buses into mobile art galleries for the next year. Four winning entries from a vast range of art submitted to Strathclyde are displayed

every month, giving passengers an ever-changing dip into the artistic pool.

The pictures themselves will be posted on the display board facing the passengers. For this reason, the project is called Bulkhead (logo: man with double-deck bus on his head!), and it is co-ordinated by Strathclyde Buses' own in-house artist Nicola Atkinson-Griffith and local artist Karen Vaughan.



Prize question: who is still with the same company?

BYGONE DAYS

Thirteen years in the melting pot

THERE ARE six familiar faces in this picture, taken in 1984, and it's our bet that many of you can name them all without too much difficulty.

The picture underlines the changes in the last 13 years, but despite the way in which the entire structure of the industry was thrown into a melting pot post-deregulation, as far as we

are aware those in the picture who have not retired are still in the industry.

At the coach launch (left to right) are Peter Wilson, Derek Keeler, Phil Ives, Vernon Edwards, Tony Symonds and Peter Newman. As usual, we have a simple question (right), with a CBW mug as prize for the first past the postroom.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, EMAP Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154 e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Ireland is no soft option

I refer to the Marksman column in (*CBW*, 23 October) and the question from 'RG of Manchester' concerning Irish O-licenses.

Both the question and the answer may have given the impression that there is no requirement for a PSV O-license in Ireland. I can assure you this is not the case.

All operators must obtain an O-license which is available to those who have met broadly similar criteria to that required in the UK. Although vehicles operating under the licence do not need to display the equivalent of an 'O' disc in the windscreen, they must not only pass an annual MOT, but also be inspected by the Garda Síochána (police) at three-yearly intervals. A successful Garda test results in the issue of a PSV certificate which must be displayed on the exterior of the vehicle concerned in the form of a metal plate - the equivalent of an 'O' disc.

In addition, individual vehicles thus certified must also be recorded by registration number on the operator's licence issued by the Department of Transport, Energy and Communications and, as if all this were not enough, each vehicle also has to display in the windscreen a valid insurance disc giving individual vehicle details. Incidentally, insurance per vehicle in Ireland costs approximately double that in the U.K.

Operating buses in Ireland is not a soft option.

RICHARD LEADBEATER
Managing Director
Guide Friday
Stratford-upon-Avon
Warwickshire

Seatbelt MOT test alarm bells

I have recently received a consultation document relating to proposals for the checking of seat belts in MOT tests published by the Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions (DETR) and I am aware that others in the industry have also received a copy. As market leader and holder of many successful independent test

Letter of the Week

Local authorities don't understand rules

Concerning the question from CMcC of Wigan (Marksman, *CBW*, 23 October) as to whether a private hire car licence is needed as well as O-licence in certain circumstances. Consider his problem from the opposite angle. I, too, operate wheelchair accessible minibuses, two PSV and two private hire. The latter are licensed by Erewash Borough Council, although most of our contract work is for Derbyshire County Council.

According to both of these bodies, if a minibus is designed or adapted to carry more than eight passengers, it is illegal for it to be licensed as a private-hire vehicle.

We had to go into all of this a couple of years ago because we removed seats from a mini-bus to use it for private-hire work. This was a welfare bus rather than a PSV. The borough council inspectors passed the vehicle and licensed it but the county council inspectors then refused to allow it to be used on their contracts because we had left Unwin tracking in for the wheelchairs and they said it might be possible to fit in more than eight seats and, therefore, the vehicle could not be operated as a private hire vehicle.

The solution was that we had to arrange the tracking in such a way that we could accommodate our wheelchair passengers but it had to be impossible to fit more than eight seats into the vehicle. Don't forget,

though, that, with all eight seats in place, it then has to be impossible to fit in a wheelchair because then you'd have nine passengers.

Bearing in mind all of the above it appears to me that your correspondent is being threatened with prosecution for not breaking the law.

On a slightly different but related topic, I know in the past Marksman has suggested all vehicles with fewer than six seats should be taken out of PSV licensing but I for one hope this never happens precisely because of cases like this. We get far more problems from private-hire licensing than we ever do from PSV simply because the local authority does not appear to understand the rules.

Private-hire licensing changes will obviously vary around the country but for us it costs between four to five times as much to license a private-hire vehicle than it does a PSV.

The council's latest bright idea is that annual inspections will now be carried out every six months, at the council's depot, and obviously the operator is expected to pay for the privilege.

Hopefully, CMcC of Wigan will let us know the outcome. I'd be very interested.

ANDREW HAVILL
Ilkeston
Derbyshire

results I have immediately responded by asking the department for more time to prepare a full presentation outlining the many concerns that I have.

I am continuing to pursue this approach.

My endeavours have been preempted by an advertisement by one of my competitors, suggesting that coaches fitted with seatbelts will fail an MOT in February next year and lists the reasons for failure.

I can imagine the concern that this must generate throughout the industry and I must respond.

You may recall that in January 1996 the Department of Transport published 'Advice to user and operators of minibuses and coaches carrying children'. Also in February the same year it published 'Advice on retrofitting seatbelts to minibuses and coaches'.

The coach industry had not received any further advice and the lead has had to come from my company, Elite Services, in the form of independent testing of installations to appropriate European standards.

We now have a consultation document, some of the contents of which seem to be in direct variance

with such standards and if introduced as regulations would fly in the face of responsible coach industry attitudes.

Alarmist advertising is not the answer but the industry should be aware that contradictory proposals may become regulations in the New Year and a sensible considered response is needed sooner rather than later. A very small part of the draft proposals indicate the sort of confusion of which I write.

The proposed MOT installation check:

- is not a seatbelt installation approval system
- cannot provide the same level of assurance about the likely performance of seatbelts and anchorages as would be obtained through type approval certificate
- would not provide any guarantee that any particular installation would perform as it was intended in the event of an accident

Elite Services will continue to make representation on behalf of the industry but we must all be aware of the possibility of misguided regulations coming into force and take steps to ensure that common sense prevails.

DAVID NICKSON
Managing Director
Elite Services
Manchester

■ *Time is running out. Many coaches are already fitted with seatbelts and there's less than three months to go before the 10 February 1998 deadline for compulsory belts in pre-1988 coaches. What do you think about the DETR's proposal? Turn back to page five for an opportunity to have your say on this important issue - Ed*

Letter of the Week wins a
Corgi Classics model bus



 **CORGI**
CLASSICS



Facing up to the challenge: managing director Graham Rogers and manager Bill Headley

National growth

OPENING up a new base in the Manchester area, is just one of the outward examples of the steady transformation that is gradually reshaping the former EYMS Group holiday subsidiary National Holidays. Until recently, the company, which was renamed and rebranded at the start of the year from being East Yorkshire Travel, was part of the larger Hull-based group. However, after last September's ownership demerger of the EYMS Group, it is now part of the Godfrey Burley Group Limited and, according to Mr Burley - set for greater things.

The new owners first major investment is the £1 million investment in new premises in the Manchester area (CBW, 6 November). Strictly speaking, the property is on a 30 year lease, but they have enabled the company to both move from the former Charterplan premises at Stockport, and complete the transformation of the coaching unit formerly owned by Stagecoach Manchester.

The new two acre site at Bredbury Park, east of Stockport, is conveniently situated near the M63 and M67 and provides covered accommodation for most of fourteen coaches now allocated there. The premises also house a reservations and administration centre and are managed by Bill Headley, who spent 13 years with Ulsterbus managing its tour operations. Around fourteen full time drivers are based there, together with 12 engineering, administration and reservations staff.

EYMS bought Charterplan from Stagecoach as recently as May last year, but it continued to use the garaging facilities at Stockport until alternative premises were secured. Although the coaching offices stayed at the magnificent building in Charles Street, which was once the palatial headquarters of the North Western Road Car Company, garaging facilities remained in the running depot across the road, until Stagecoach required them in order to refurbish the unit for its own

minibus operations.

Charterplan then relocated to the adjacent former GM Buses South central works but facilities were far from ideal, and at the end were shared with a motley selection of withdrawn MCW Metroriders and Dennis Domino midibuses.

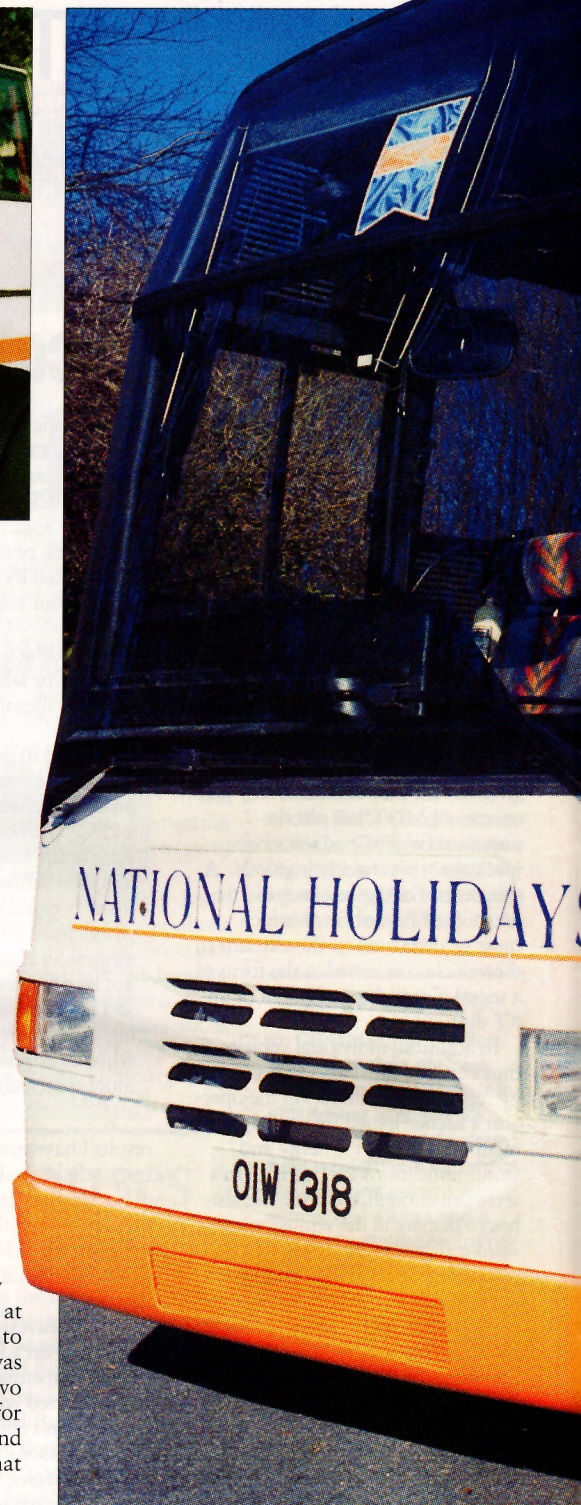
Although it was clear that Charterplan was not being evicted, EYMS looked long and hard for new premises, in order to establish a new separate identity for its new acquisition. Fellow subsidiary Finglands continues to fight for space at its cramped premises on Wilmslow Road, so there was no prospect of a merger at Rusholme, and suitable premises were hard to find. Success came when a new industrial unit was found less than a quarter of a mile from the Volvo main dealer which had provided a home, first for the fledgling Stagecoach Manchester 192 unit, and later for Finglands, after it had purchased that operation.

The new depot provided the ideal opportunity for a complete change. The developers were erecting an industrial unit, and National Holidays had plenty of input in finalising the completed design, as the building went up.

The completed depot area is fresh, clean and empty. It never sees the whole fleet together at any one time: "Don't ask me how many vehicles the depot can hold" said Mr Headley.

He thinks that on one evening, 10 coaches actually met up, but estimates suggest that up to 35 coaches could be accommodated at any one time, within the site.


Taking over Charterplan was quite a challenge, as existing operations needed a radical transformation. Most of the drivers and reservations staff stayed on with the new owners, but managers and some of the administrative staff left. It was a proud company going nowhere fast, and estimates vary



The Paramount/Volvo B10M is preferred as

of the exact extent of losses that were being incurred. Charterplan had been a typical local authority coaching operator, which grabbed whatever work it could, with little consideration of the true bottom line. All along it was aided by a spread of overhead costs onto the ongoing bus business.

National Holidays business philosophy is completely different, being primarily a tour and holiday company, with a total turnover in the region of £12 million in 1996. It now claims to be England's third largest holiday tour coach operator, having seen its business grow from 8,000 passengers five years ago to over 100,000 last year - 63 coaches are operated from bases in Hull, Stockton, North Shields and Stockport, and has grown recently through the acquisition of Armstrong Gal-

A large white coach with orange and blue stripes, featuring the 'NATIONAL HOLIDAYS' logo and a stylized flag graphic. The bus is parked on a dark surface, possibly a road or parking lot, with trees in the background.

As National Holidays gains number three slot in the coach holiday league Andrew Jarosz examines its strategy in the North West

National Holidays slims down the former-Charterplan business to its core tour and holiday products

ley coaches from Stagecoach Busways in Newcastle at the start of this year. The majority of the fleet has been sourced secondhand, but the first three new Volvo coaches are entering service.

At the time of the takeover, Charterplan was operating 27 coaches, with a mixture of excursions, tours and private hire. After the appointment of Mr Headley, who has had experience in hotels and wholesaling, the business was slimmed down to a core tour product, and the fleet reduced to 14. The Paramount / B10M combination is the favoured National Holidays vehicle and four of the five acquired Setras, as well as some of the older Vehicles have now been sold. With a main Volvo dealer within walking distance, there should never be a problem with spares!

The company closed the five-vehicle London

outstation because returns weren't high and in the words of md Graham Rogers: "The whole job should have been managed a lot better."

The new tour programme which offers 25,000 seats this year has done away with feeders, and route pickups are the order of the day. Chorlton Street Manchester and Stockport are still the company's two busiest pick up points, but Mr Rogers would like to see a single high profile operator for the whole area, and says that the principal objective for the the region is growth and development.

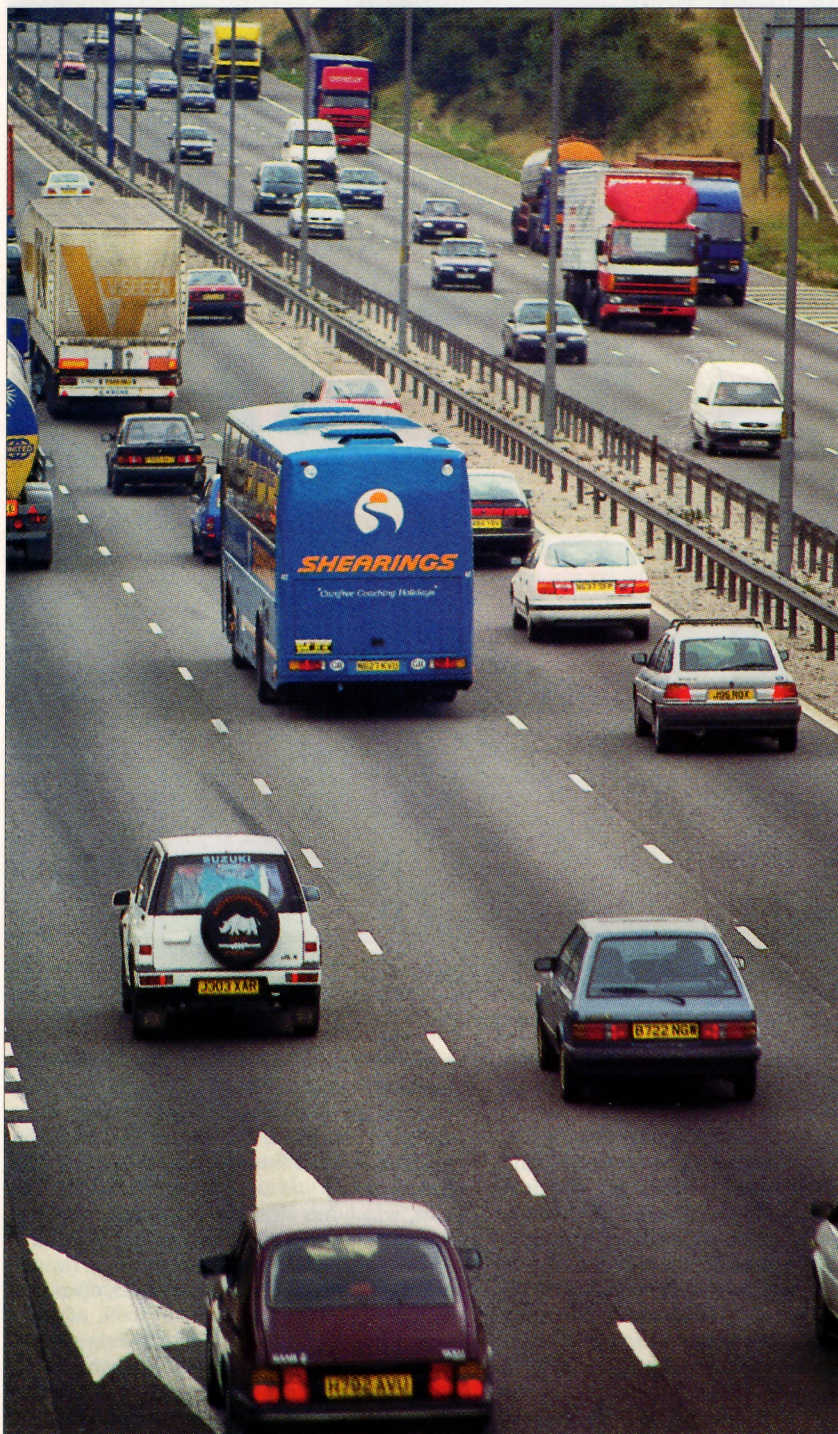
The Bredbury office continues to pitch for the group travel, and operates its own travel club offering its own ideas and initiatives emanating from Hull head office. Occasionally vehicles work for other tour organisers, but this has been heavily scaled down from Charterplan days. In fact, all ref-

erence to Charterplan has now been obliterated, with only National Holidays Manchester being visible on the rear of coaches. The company has a regular column in the Manchester Evening News on Thursdays and Fridays through which it promotes holidays and notifies late availability bargains, which has already been a very successful method of growing the market in East Yorkshire.

New ideas from Manchester this year, include a regular weekend Dublin break, which offers dinner, bed and breakfast for only £69, and has proved immensely popular. Other budget weekend breaks, based at good hotels with winter availability have also grown the business. Mr Rogers says that a target of 150,000 passengers nationally for 1997 is in sight, and the whole organisation is building towards the 200,000 mark for next year.

Halve traffic chaos

Longer local authority contracts and an American-style school bus system are just two of the proposals put in a new report



'We want to appreciate the car but not let it foul up the future' - KPMG/Henley

Realistic new proposals which could cut traffic pollution and road congestion in half and save more than £1 billion a year are suggested in a joint response to the Transport Supremo John Prescott's integrated transport debate. Among the suggestions by KPMG and Henley Management College is that local authorities award long-term contracts to coach and bus companies to encourage investment in new vehicles and to transform levels of service.

The report also suggests we follow the American-style school bus system.

Roger Cockroft, automotive consultant at KPMG, said: "A decent school bus system could cut rush hour traffic by 20%. Run properly, it would be much safer for kids and less stressful for parents. In America over 80% of school children use a school bus. In the UK only 3% have that opportunity." A further 7% use a registered local service.

Routes could be extended to town and city workers and a door-to-door service is considered a viable alternative to car use. School buses able to carry up to 69 passengers would remove between 20 and 40 vehicles from the road for each bus.

The report suggests another proposal to reduce rush hour madness - staggering the start and finish times for office staff and factory workers in major towns and cities.

Mr Cockroft said: "Some types of business activities need to be excluded from this type of scheme, but if half of the city's workforce co-ordinated their start times over a two hour period, congestion could be cut by 30%."

The report contains four other proposals:

- Vehicle replacement systems
- Smart-card controlled servicing
- Rolling-road rail freight
- Driving skills improvement

Mr Cockroft said: "We want to appreciate the car, but not let it foul up the future. Nobody wants that. Britain loses an estimated £2.1 billion each year because of congestion."

The report proposes cash to help people scrap a car more than seven years old, but this would be balanced with bigger taxes for leaded fuel and higher road fund licences for older vehicles.

A recent RAC road traffic survey suggested that over 55% of road traffic pollution is produced by just a tenth of the vehicles on our roads; a new car today is five times safer than 10 years ago and over 20,000 tonnes of particulates and 40 million tonnes of carbon are emitted each year by road traffic.

Mr Cockroft continued: "A £1,000 grant for scrapping an old vehicle is a good way for the Government to encourage greener vehicles onto the roads. The Government gets the money back through VAT and by raising taxes on vehicles which pollute the most."

"Schemes like this have already been trialled in France, Ireland, and Greece with tremendous success. Why can't Britain take the lead in Europe and set the standards for others to follow?"

The scheme falls broadly in line with proposals made by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) in its 1995 report "Retiring old vehicles" and would include trucks and buses.

Mr Cockroft claimed: "An old bus pumps out over 130 times more pollutants than a car. A seven year old bus is 8 times worse than a brand new one."

Produced jointly by KPMG's automotive practice and Henley Management College's Centre for Automotive management, the report responds to the Government's recent plea for suggestions to tackle the growing transport problems in the UK.

Peter Cooke, Director at Henley, said "We believe our proposals would move more than nine billion tonne kilometres from the roads to the railways and cut pollution and congestion to pre-1950 levels."



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Premiere air-conditioning for

PLAXTON

FIVE DAF BUS SB3000s with air-conditioned Plaxton Premiere 350 bodies are the latest vehicle for operation on the busy Kent commuter services run by London Coaches (Kent). They are the first Premieres for London Coaches.

The new vehicles have 53 reclining seats which, along with the air-conditioning and tinted double glazing, offer commuters a high standard of comfort. The specification also provides London Coaches with the flexibility to use the vehicles on other work between the commuter peaks, including sightseeing and hotel transfers.

"We pride ourselves on offering the residents of North Kent the best way of commuting to London," said Graham Wykes, transport manager of London Coaches. "Our customers - 4,000 of them every day - are guaranteed a seat in a high-quality coach."

"The new Premieres provide us with a vehicle which is not only ideal for commuter work but which can also be used on charter work and tours. For this the specification includes a courier seat."

The DAF SB3000s have ZF 4HP500 gearbox, giving London Coaches its preferred automatic transmission to ease the driver's workload in London traffic. The new Premieres were supplied by Hughes DAF, the Cleckheaton-based bus and coach distributor which will be known as Arriva Bus and Coach as a consequence of the Cowie group's name change (CBW, 13 November).



Big spend on Oxford's Citylink express

VOLVO

GO-AHEAD GROUP subsidiary, the Oxford Bus Company has launched the first of 12 new and four two-year-old coaches on the hotly-contested Oxford to London

express service.

The company says the new £150,000 Volvo B10M-chassied coaches are for its Citylink X90 service and represent further improvement in the quality of the Citylink fleet - half of which will be replaced

by Spring next year.

Each coach is equipped with double-glazing, 53 seats with seatbelts, and air-conditioning in time for the Summer.

The four new coaches have Plaxton Premiere 350 bodywork and were supplied by Kirkby. An order for a further eight B10Ms, this time with Excalibur bodies is due for delivery in late February and to clearly distinguish the coaches as bound for Oxford, they have been allocated cherished registration plates R1 OXF to R12 OXF.

Oxford Bus Company md, Douglas Adie, said: "In recent years the company has invested over £7 million on new buses for local services in Oxford and it gives me great pleasure to launch coaches worth over £2 million."



First new coach for Gemini Travel

KIRKBY

GEMINI TRAVEL of Ipswich has taken delivery of its first new coach - a Mercedes-Benz 814D with Plaxton Beaver body. The company, now in its fifth year of operation, has created a niche market by specialising in the supply of coaches for small groups.

"We've established a good reputation and built up a broad cross-section of customers," said Gemini's Ed Nicholls.

"Alongside local hires and school trips, we have work from the film industry plus the occasional Conti-

Commuters



mental trip. I believe a broad mix of work is essential to the healthy development of the company."

Until now Gemini Travel has been buying good used coaches, but now has the volume - and quality - of work which justifies investing in a new coach. "We know the Mer-

cedes to be very reliable product - which is crucial to a small business like ours - and when it came to choosing a body the Beaver was ideally suited to our needs."

Gemini Travel runs five coaches and its new Mercedes was supplied by Kirkby Coach & Bus.

IN BRIEF



Merc is Hillary's sixth coach

A NEW Mercedes-Benz 512 van conversion brings the fleet of Prudhoe coach operator, Hillary's, up to six vehicles.

The latest addition was converted by Crystals Conversions of Doncaster and includes a PLS tail lift and 15 passenger seats.



First UVG S320s in Middlesex

THE FIRST of five UVG S320 coaches to be sold to coach operators in Middlesex has been supplied to Chalfont Coaches of Harrow which has taken this 57-seat example of the Dennis Javelin-chassied coach. Four 69-seat versions are due to be delivered to fellow Middlesex operator, David Corbel of London before the end of November.



Optimo heads for Browns

BROWNS of Newbridge, Edinburgh, has taken delivery of a new Toyota Optimo IV. The 21-seat Caetano-bodied small coach was supplied by Toyota's Scottish dealer, Regal Coach Sales, Kirkintilloch.

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1993 L Dennis Javelin Plaxton Premiere 320, 53 reclining seats

Exterior White, Red & Blue, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Radio, PA, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Seat Belts and Armrests. CHOICE AVAILABLE. Ref: 1140

Private Volvo B58 Van Hool Alizee - Rebody 1984, 53 seats

Exterior White, Red and Blue, Interior Brown Moquette, TV, Video, Radio, PA, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Curtains, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 1050

1982 Private Volvo B10M Berkhof Everest 3.8, 53 reclining seats

Exterior Yellow & White, Interior Grey Coloured Striped Moquette, Telma Retarder, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Through Lockers, Rack Lockers, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Seat Belts, Armrests and Provision for Toilet. Ref: 1078

1983 Y Volvo B10M Berkhof Everest, 49 reclining seats

Exterior Blue & White, Interior Brown Moquette, Exhaust Brake, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Side Lockers, Rack Lockers, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Blinds, Continental Door, Seat Belts, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref: 1115

1987 D Volvo B10M Plaxton Paramount 3200, 49 reclining seats

Exterior White, Interior Brown Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Tinted Windows, Seat Belts, Armrests, Toilet and Provision for Destination Gear. Ref: 1138

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1994 CAETANO OPTIMO MARK III, 18 luxury coach seats, this vehicle is in excellent condition and has one owner from new. long MoT

1989 VOLVO B10M LOW DRIVER VAN HOOL ALIZEE H, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, MoT June 1998

1989 VOLVO B10M GLE JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, toilet, double glazing, wiring for video, Webasto and including air conditioning

1988 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD/12/29 INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, exterior white.

1985 MAN SR280 HD INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, continental door, toilet, wired for video, new MoT.

1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245 TL11, BERKHOF EVEREST, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, continental door, sunken toilet, wiring for video.

1984 VOLVO B10M LAG GALAXY, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, new MoT.

1984 MAN SR 280, Low Line, 53 reclining seats, courier seat, double glazing, seat belts. MoT Dec '98.

1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90, 57 seats, toilet, long MoT, dateless plate, exterior plain white.

1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD ECW DUAL PURPOSE, 49 bus seats, MoT February 1998

1979 VOLVO B58 DUPLÉ DOMINANT, 53 seater, very clean interior, new MoT

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Grayson system helps speed up maintenance

A new lease of life for Lance radiators

DENNIS LANCE buses with their cramped radiator space get a new lease of life with a quick-release radiator cassette, claims manufacturer Grayson.

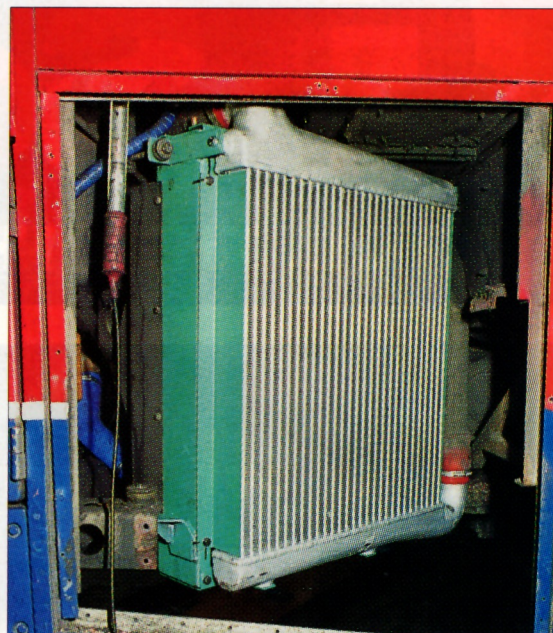
The cassette, designed specially for Metroline Travel, reduces the replacement time for the Lance radiator from seven hours to 45 minutes, and also allows the unit to be cleaned to reduce replacements.

Grayson's original concept, of a radiator housing which can be released with just four bolts, solved similar problems with Metrobus, Titan, Dart and Dominator models. The Lance conversion is the latest.

"The main problem seems to be with the position of the radiator which, because it has no air-ram effect, needs a very large fan to cool it," said Metroline engineering director Mike Smith. "In hot weather vehicles cope with the morning rush without difficulty but by 4 pm, the combination of heat and traffic becomes too much, and we have to take them out of service when we need them the most."

According to Mr Smith, with the conversion, access to the problem areas is made much easier, especially replacement.

● *Grayson can be reached on 01203 855621, fax 01203 473030.*



Quick release cassette cuts down-time

Pollutants caught in trap

IT'S GOOD enough for the garbage truck... and could be the answer to Quality Partnership agreements.

Eminox's CRT exhaust box has been fitted on trial to one of Preston Council's Scania 93 refuse collection trucks to reduce pollution in the stop-start operation of the lorry, and improve the working environment of its operators.

The CRT eliminates 90% of harmful emissions including particulates, no matter whether the vehicle has reached full operating temperature with full exhaust throughput, or is idling shortly after starting.

So far, more than 2,000 CRT units have been fitted.

● *Contact Eminox on 01427 810088, fax 01427 810061.*

Reduce risk of leaks

HOW'S YOUR CLAMP compression? According to Fister UK of Wiltshire, it could suffer badly in the cold of winter.

The Corsham company says the combination of high engine temperatures and cold nights is a disaster for water hoses, which collapse and shrink to inflict extreme pressure on hose clamps. The result can be leakage and downtime.

Fister, needless to say, has the answer with an imported range of stainless steel American clamps which have a patented design giving a permanent seal from 450F to -40F.

Thermal Flex Clamps comes in 13 sizes from 25/45mm to 172/194mm.

● *Fister can be reached on 01249 714769, fax 01249 714227.*

Marlin has KLAM retarder

KLAM is fitted by Leicester Carriage Builders in its new Isuzu midicoach, the Marlin (CBW, 13 November).

KLAM electromagnetic retarders have been fitted to trucks since 1960, but has found new PCV applications. The long pedigree, however, has enabled KLAM to produce three variations of retarders, including an inline unit with sealed-for-life bearings, a normally-lubricated inline unit, gearbox or axle-mounted retarder, and a directly-mounted gearbox retarder.

● *The range is supplied exclusively by auto supplier P&P Sergeant, on 0151 632 5903, fax 0151 632 5908.*

Avoid air-con replacement cost

THE ONWARD rush to air-condition the coach fleet has left many operators with the headache of extra maintenance bills, but an Ashford company says some operators could be wasting money.

Vehicle Refrigeration Services in Middlesex says compressor problems are the most regular.

Occasionally, compressors are replaced when the fault lies elsewhere.

"We find that many compressors are changed at vast expense for very minor faults such as leaking seals or a failed bearing," said md Tony Hales.

"These can be repaired at a fraction of the cost of a new compressor. It is also not uncommon for compressors to be changed when there is nothing wrong with them."

The ultimate cost is not only downtime, but occasions when operators lose work because their air conditioning is inoperable, mainly because the cost of compressor replacement is beyond them.

VRS has a fully equipped test rig which can run the compressor, off the vehicle, to assess the problem. The repairs, with a year's parts and labour warranty, can be back with the operator within 48 hours.

It's one of the benefits of doing nothing else, says VRS, and ensures the company has a full range of spares in stock, with some of the most experienced air conditioning engineers.

● *For full details of VRS' services, contact the sales office on 01784 248906.*



Keep cool with Agriemach

Sound and heat insulation in one single layer blanket

A NEW insulation material from Agriemach promises sound and thermal protection in a single layer.

Cool-It Mat is a silica blanketing insulation material sandwiched between two facings, of Mylar® and foil. If strong heat shielding is needed - around exhausts and turbos, for example - the mat is mounted foil-side out. If less heat will be encountered, the Mylar® side is used to enhance sound insulation.

Agriemach says the dual density of the glass fibre fill-

ing aids absorption of high and low frequency sound. In extreme conditions, it can be used with other products from the Agriemach range such as Exhaust Insulation Wrap and Aluminised Heat Barrier.

Cool-It Mat is suitable for retrofit using either weather strip adhesive in low heat or push-in plastic fasteners in high-heat applications. It comes in 24in x 48in sheets or 24in x 50ft rolls.

● *Agriemach is in Uckfield, on 01825 769277, fax 01825 768330.*

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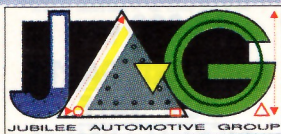
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£4,000 for the two

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14 seater, 1 colour blue, new test, petrol, excellent condition

£3,950 + VAT

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53 seats, reupholstered, P.P. Wired for TV/video. Voith retarder, taxed and 11 months MoT. Superb all round condition.

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51 seats, exec toilet, drinks, TV, video, fridge, carpets, seat belts, bunk, excellent condition, all white, available with Winter '97 work.

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Excellent condition, with work

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£18,000 + VAT

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£6,500 + VAT

All coaches are belted
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New clutch, new compressor, brakes relined, new water pump, new foot brake valve. Full executive coach, does require a retrim.

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1994 (M) DENNIS JAVELIN - PLAXTON PREMIERE 320, 57 seats, air conditioned, radio/PA, excellent condition REDUCED TO SELL ONLY £79,500 Yes £79,500 + VAT.

1993 (K) EOS 200 - MAN ENGINE, 48/52 reclining seats, Blaupunkt radio equipment, twin monitors, Webasto heating system, blinds and curtains, centre wc, (this is an EOS 200 not 100 model), hot and cold drink facilities £99,500 + VAT

1989 (G) LAG PANORAMIC - (DAF POWERED), 49/53 reclining seats, air conditioned, Blaupunkt audio equipment, twin monitors, Webasto, blinds and curtains, centre WC, hot and cold drinks facilities £49,500 + VAT

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1991 DAF SB2300 PLAXTON LOW DRIVER

53 recl. air door, radio etc. Very nice condition. MoT 13.5.98.

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Petrol, 14 passenger seats, seatbelts fitted, full year PSV, MoT, C.O.I.F.

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1982 1 x 57 + COURIER - (11 months MoT)

1982 1 x 53 + COURIER - (Volvo Rec. engine, 11 months warranty, 11 months MoT)

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Unique vehicle, extremely low mileage, never used as PSV, new CIF, MoT to 25.9.98, fully carpeted, curtains, 47 semi-recliners, tinted windows, pa/radio cassette, side lockers, unletered, new engine fitted by Vauxhall Motors just run in. Full service and mileage history for last 7 years.

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Fully fitted with seatbelts, radio/cassette/PA, full draw curtains, 53 seats plus courier, MoT to May, tax to July, one owner from new, good condition.

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'88 609

20 seats
REEVE BURGESS

Power door, manual, MoT 8/98

'86 608

21 seats

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1990

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51 recliner seats with toilet, H&C water, fridge, Telma, MoT May '98.

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1989

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BEDFORD, 29 seater bus, Bedford 300 engine, tested September 1998, tax February 1998. £1,500 ono + VAT. Tel: 01685 872074. 73670/BE

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30-seat coach, fitted with Plaxton Relaxa reclining seat and seat belts, power door, manual gearbox, retrimmed and refurbished by us in 1996, price includes new MoT and respray in your livery, outstanding appearance for year £5,995

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1989 PP DAF SBR 3000 ATi PLAXTON 4000

72 seat executive, fitted with
4 TV's, video, fridge, toilet, drinks
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MoT Jan '98.

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This vehicle is in excellent condition

For further details

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73695/DAF

X REG Daf MB200 Supreme 5 GT. 53
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73668/DAF

86 DAF LAG PANORAMIC. ZF gearbox,
49 R&C, radio/PA/cassette, driver's bunk,
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exterior, seat belts, MoT September
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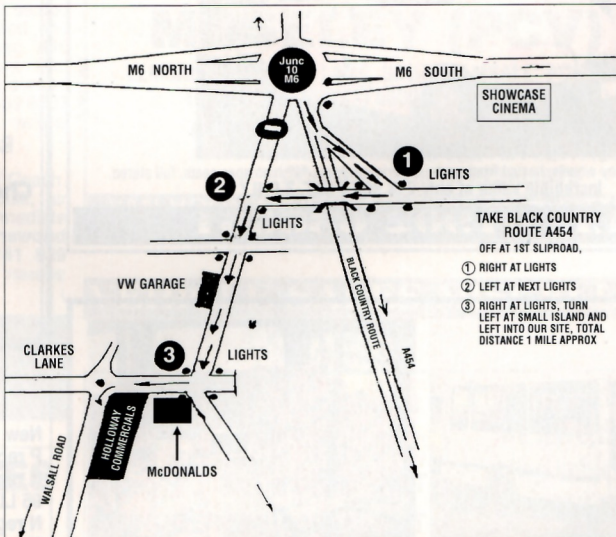
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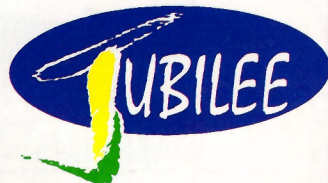
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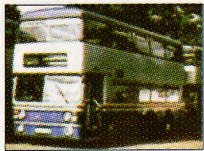
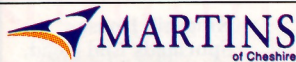
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◆ 1994 Scania K 113 GRB/Irizar Century - 49 reclining seats, Retarder, air conditioning, TV/Video, Radio/PA, driver's bunk, drinks machine, rear sunken toilet, fridge, continental door, Webasto and timer, foot rests, aluminium wheels. Choice of 2 - with and without automatic transmission.

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- 1991 H VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 310 BHP INTERCOOLER**, 53/57 reclining seats, ZF fully auto transmission, pannier lockers, double glazed, blinds, POD, radio/PA, belts£62,500
- 1989 F VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, low driver, 50 reclining seats, continental door, Sutrak air conditioning, Webasto, Telma, double glazing, pannier lockers, radio/PA, new test, choice£62,500
- 1989 F VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre demountable toilet/continental door, aircraft lockers, double glazing, Webasto, radio/PA£59,750
- 1988 PP VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 41 reclining seats, radio/PA, absolutely mint condition£57,500
- 1988 F VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 35/39 reclining seats, 2 tables, pannier lockers, radio/PA, retrimmed + repainted white, choice£57,500
- 1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 49/53 reclining seats, courier seat, centre demountable toilet/continental door, radio/PA£57,500
- 1988 E VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 53 reclining seats, Telma, double glazing, radio, PA, new test£54,000
- 1986 C VOLVO B10M CAETANO ALGARVE**, 53 reclining seats, courier, continental door, radio/PA, new test£32,500
- 1985 C VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200**, 43 retrimmed seats, repainted and painted white, new test, choice£42,500
- 1984 PP VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE 599**, 49 retrimmed reclining seats, courier seat, rear sunken toilet/continental door, Telma, radio/PA£37,500
- 1983 PP VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE**, 49 new retrimmed reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet/continental door, radio/PA£32,500

OTHERS

- 1991 H MAN 10-180 CAETANO ALGARVE**, 32 reclining seats, courier, rear continental door, rear toilet, curtains, fridge, boiler, radio/PA, white£57,500
- 1989 F MERCEDES 609 REEVE BURGESS**, 19 seat, deep boot, seatbelts£12,500
- 1989 LEYLAND SWIFT REEVE BURGESS HARRIER**, 33 reclining Fainsa seats, courier seat, rack lighting, forced air, curtains, radio/PA, power door, rear locker£24,500
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- 1985 FORD TRANSIT DORMOBILE 16 SEATER BUS**, 5 standing, new test£3,500
- 1984 BEDFORD NJM WADHAM STRINGER VANGUARD**, Ratcliffe side lift, low mileage£2,500
- 1984 PP LEYLAND TIGER 245 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500**, 49 retrimmed reclining seats, courier, rear sunken toilet/continental door, Telma, double glazing, air conditioning, radio/PA, recent recon engine and gearbox£27,500
- 1983 LEYLAND TIGER 245 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200 EXPRESS**, 53 reclining retrimmed seats, auto, radio/PA£15,500
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- 1990 PP VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE**, 49 recliners, courier, centre toilet, continental door, double glazed, Telma, bunk, fridge, boiler, blinds, TV and video£77,500
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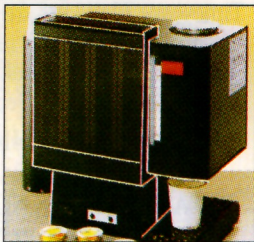
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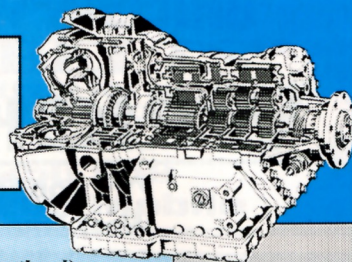


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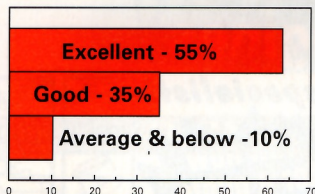
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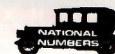
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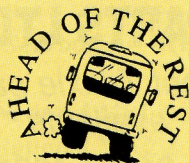
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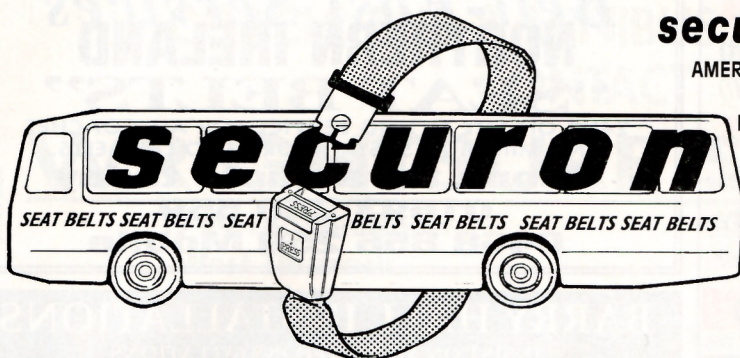
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Operations Manager Coastline

Stagecoach Coastline is seeking an experienced manager for one of its depots on the South Coast. Operating 50 vehicles and employing 100 staff this busy depot will provide a major challenge as customers' demands become ever more exacting.

Working as part of a small management team, the Operations Manager will be responsible for ensuring the provision of a high quality of service through the recruitment, training and motivation of staff and even handed discipline. Setting and achieving budget targets and expanding our customer base are also essential parts of the job.

Applicants will need to display sound financial awareness together with the ability to motivate and manage staff.

A salary and conditions package commensurate with the job will be provided.

Applications including full curriculum vitae and an explanation of why you will be successful in the post should be made to:

D. TOPLIFF, Managing Director, Stagecoach (South) Ltd.,
112 Malling Street, LEWES, East Sussex, BN7 2RB
Closing date for applications is Friday 12 December 1997

Stagecoach
COASTLINE BUSES

73810/APP

NORFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL Department of Planning and Transportation

72096/TEN

Tenders are invited for the provision of local bus services in the Breckland and Norwich areas of Norfolk commencing January 1998.

Forms including full details are available on application to the Director of Planning and Transportation, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2SC, marked for the attention of the Public Transport Officer, and must be returned to the Director of Law and Administration not later than 2 p.m. on Thursday, 18 December 1997.

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Please apply in writing by sending your current CV and details you feel relevant to this position to:

Michael Hickinbottom, Senior Executive, Impact West Midlands, St. Peter's Centre, Canning Building College/Bridge Road, Salford, Birmingham B8 3TE
CLOSING DATE 28/11/97

DEVELOPING QUALITY SKILLS

72095/APP



Highways and Transportation Services Invitation to be included on Tender List for Contracted Passenger Transport Services in the Borough of Poole

The Borough of Poole is reviewing its list of operators interested in running contracted bus services. If you have experience of or would like to operate home to school transport, special educational transport or contracted local bus services and would like to be included on the list to receive tender documents for these types of services then please write for an application form to:

John McVey, Passenger Transport Manager,
Highways and Transportation Services,
St Johns House, Serpentine Road, Poole, Dorset BH15 2DX

72166/TEN

Eastern Counties

ENGINEERING MANAGER - BURY ST EDMUNDS

We are looking for a highly motivated 'hands on' individual to lead our engineering team at Bury St Edmunds depot.

The successful applicant will be responsible for the effective management of the workshop, which will involve organising repairs and scheduling maintenance of a mixed fleet of 45 buses.

As well as ensuring high standards of maintenance within agreed budgets, the Engineering Manager will be a first-class people person, not only motivating and directing staff in the workshop but also participating fully in all aspects of the smooth operation of the Bury St Edmunds business.

The successful candidate will report to me but work closely with both the Depot Manager at Bury St Edmunds and the Engineering Manager at Ipswich. Excellent communication skills together with a flexible work approach are prerequisites.

The salary for this interesting post will not be less than £15,000 for the right person.

Please apply in writing, enclosing a full c.v. to reach me by: December 2nd 1997

Steve Challis
Director Suffolk
Eastern Counties Omnibus Co. Ltd
Dog's Head Street
Ipswich, Suffolk. IP4 1AD

73801/APP

Stagecoach BUSWAYS

FINANCE DIRECTOR

**A vacancy has arisen for a Finance Director
and Company Secretary at Stagecoach
Busways in Sunderland.**

The postholder will be responsible for the financial administration, control and development of information systems for the Stagecoach Group's Busways and Transit subsidiaries, which together operate some 850 buses in the North East of England and have a combined turnover of around £70m.

The post also carries responsibility for the preparation of budgets, management accounts and statutory accounts for both companies to strict reporting deadlines.

The successful applicant will be a qualified accountant with at least 5 years post-qualification experience at a senior level and a proven track record. As a key player in the Stagecoach Busways management team, good communication skills will be essential.

This is a high profile appointment requiring a dedicated professional.

Applications, including a CV with details of current post and remuneration, should be forwarded to:

Mr. J. Conroy, Managing Director,
Stagecoach Busways, Wheatsheaf,
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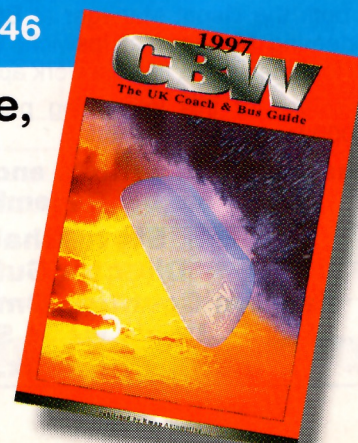
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'Better service' is aim of National Holidays

HULL-BASED NATIONAL HOLIDAYS has appointed Peter Butterworth as group financial controller.

Mr Butterworth, 44, brings with him extensive experience in a number of service sector roles and will take responsibility for finance, administration and information technology development throughout National Holidays' four operations in Tyneside, Teesside, Manchester and

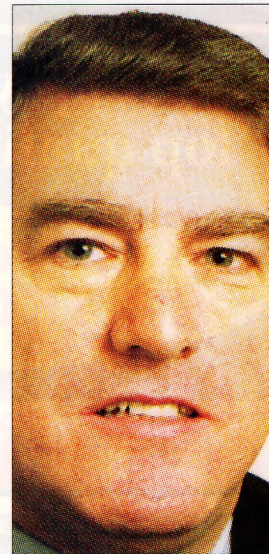
East Yorkshire, together with the company's travel shops in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and Hull.

National Holidays md, Graham Rogers, said: "Working in a consumer based industry we recognise the need for professionalism and quality of service at all times.

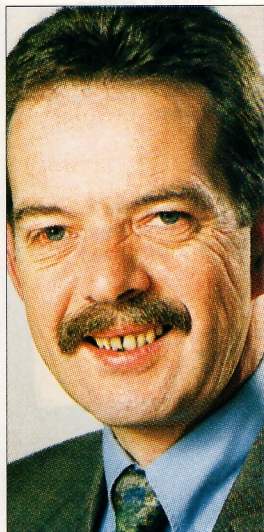
"This appointment will enable National Holidays to review procedures and strategy with the objective of pro-

viding our customer, suppliers and travel trade partners with an even better service, together with determining opportunities for the company to achieve growth and performance targets into the future."

The company currently has an annual turnover in excess of £16 million and in 1997 will carry over 150,000 passengers on its own UK and Continental coach holidays.



Butterworth: in control



Baarbé: new BJ director

Baarbé goes to Neoplan

BERKHOF JONCKHEERE, the merged Dutch/Belgian manufacturing group has a new commercial director responsible for northern Europe. Mr Baarbé used to be director of Neoplan BV in the Netherlands and Belgium.

The Shires wins prize

THE SHIRES AND NOTHUMBRIA came out tops in the semi final of the first British Bus National Skills Competition when engineering teams from nine of the British Bus group took part.

A hard-fought final between The Shires and Northumbria included more in-depth tasks, and The Shires emerged as the winners. Its team members, Trevor Hanks, Micheal Healey and Chris Irvine - received their prizes from Mike Ball, managing director of Volvo Bus UK, one of the main sponsors.

Warner replaces Steel

BARRY WARNER has replaced John Steel as managing director of Stagecoach.

Mr Warner will take on this additional responsibility. His present position is md of Stagecoach United

Counties. Stagecoach Cam-bus will continue as an independent company.

"The company will continue its present policy of substantial investment in new vehicles, and of keeping fares as low as possible to encourage the use of public transport," said Mr Steel.

Jenkins returns to the West

SOUTHERN NATIONAL of Taunton has appointed a new manager for its Somerset division.

Paul Jenkins, 41, is a graduate of Exeter University, with 20 years experience in the bus industry.

He has worked previously for other bus compa-

nies in Devon, Berkshire, Kent and Gloucestershire.

Speaking after his appointment, Mr Jenkins said: "I am delighted to be based in the West Country again and I look forward to working with the excellent team of people here at Southern National."

SUBSCRIPTIONS



Coach and Bus Week is the news weekly for coach and bus operators. *Transit* provides vital analysis of, and information on, the UK public transport scene every fortnight. Together they make an unbeatable and invaluable package. All annual subscription rates include delivery by first class post. It is important to fill out all parts of this form. NB: *Transit* is not available on subscription without *Coach and Bus Week*.

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Senior/General ☐ 02
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Other (please specify) ☐ 05

2. What is your company's main business function?

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1991 H LEYLAND TIGER 290 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 51/53 SEATS

Exterior White & Red, Interior Grey Moquette, Telma Retarder, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Front Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Courier Fan, Pannier Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Curtains, Continental Door, Armrests, Crew Seat and Toilet. Ref. 0288

1989 F LEYLAND TIGER DUPE 320 WITH TL11 ENGINE, 53 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White only, Interior Brown and Orange Moquette, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Driver Operated Door, Double Glazing, Blinds, Seat Belts and Armrests. Ref. 0991

1986 PRIVATE LEYLAND TIGER DUPE 320 WITH TL11 ENGINE, 53 SEATS

Exterior White Only, Interior Green Moquette, Driver Operated Door, Rack Lockers and Rear Window. Ref. 1009

1989 F LEYLAND TIGER DUPE EXPRESS 320, 57 SEATS.

Exterior Blue & White, Interior Grey Coloured Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Driver Operated Door, Side Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Seat Belts and Provision for Destination Gear, Express Doors. Ref. 1139

1981 A LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME 4, SEMI AUTO GEARBOX, 53 SEATS

Exterior Grey & Maroon, Interior Beige Moquette, Driver Operated Door, Continental Door and Armrests. Ref. 1128

MINI/MIDI

1994 M VOLVO B6 CAETANO ALGARVE, 34 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Grey Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, Microphone, Wheel Discs, Driver Operated Door, Drivers Fan, Tinted Windows, Peage Window, Double Glazing, Curtains, Continental Door, Seat Belts and Crew Seat. Ref. 0144

1990 G LEYLAND SWIFT REEVE BURGESS HARRIER, 39 LOW BACK SEATS

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1987 E VOLKSWAGON OPTARE CITYPACER, 25 LOW BACK SEATS

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1987 E VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 32 SEATS

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1983 PRIVATE BEDFORD C.F PETROL DORMOBILE, 16 SEATS

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AUTOMATICS



1987 PRIVATE DUPE 425 CUMMINS INTEGRAL, AUTOMATIC, 52 RECLINING SEATS

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1991 H VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, AUTOMATIC, 49 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior White, Interior Dark & Light Brown Coloured Striped Moquette, Radio, Pa, Cassette, TV/Video, Driver Operated Door, ABS, Integral Side Locker, Toilet, Double Glazing, Webasto Tinted Windows, Blinds, Continental Door, Crew Seat, Crew Compartment, Fridge, Hot & Cold Water, Horizontal Split Screen. CHOICE AVAILABLE. Ref. 0084

1987 E VOLVO B9M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, AUTOMATIC, 35 RECLINING SEATS

Exterior Blue & White, Interior Brown & Blue Moquette, Telma Retarder, TV, Video, Radio, Pa, Microphone, Cassette, Wheel Discs, Alloy Wheels, Driver Operated Door, Air Conditioning, Side Locker, Rack Locker, Rear Window, Tinted Windows, Double Glazing, Blinds, Armrests and Crew Seat. Ref. 0231

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